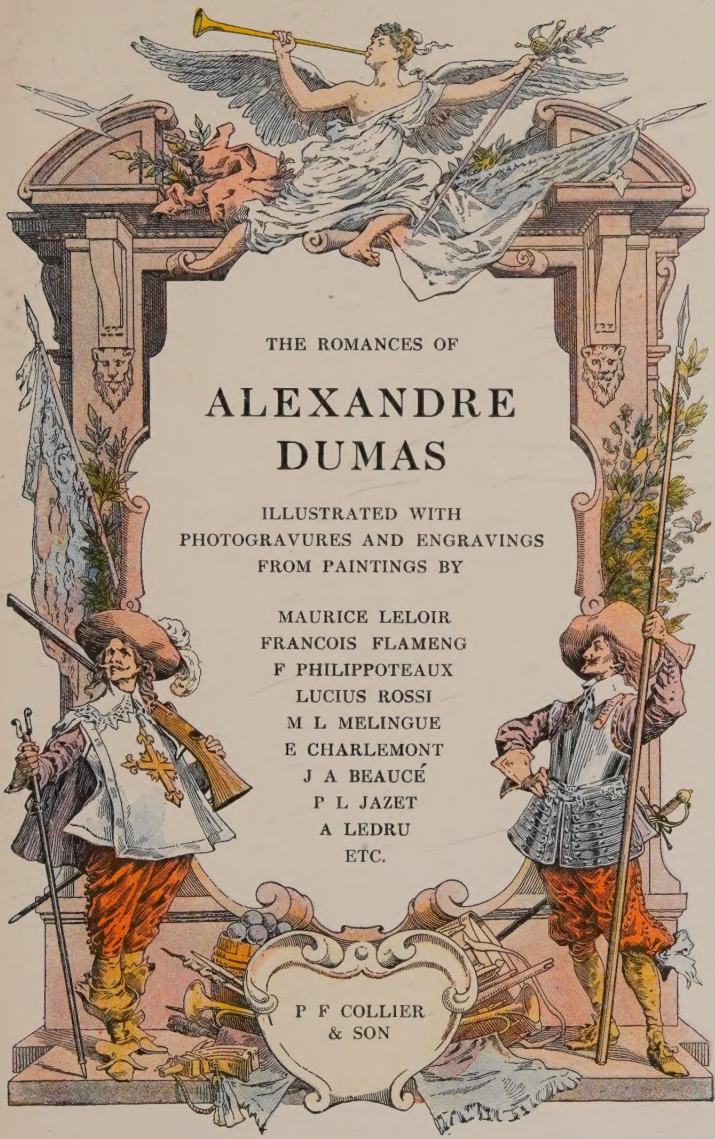

THE ROMANCES OF

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

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THE WHITES AND THE BLUES

VOLUME TWO

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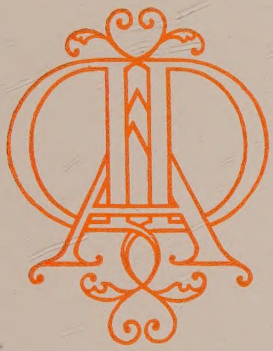

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THE WHITES AND THE BLUES

VOLUME TWO

THE WHITES AND THE BLUES

CHAPTER XXIII

THE VICTORY

THE struggle on this side was indeed terrible! Scarcely had Morgan, who was boiling with impatience, heard Danican's voice, still a long distance behind, crying "Forward!" than he fell like an avalanche upon Cartaux's men. The movement was so rapid that the latter had not even time to present arms and fire. They aimed at random, and then received Morgan and his men at the point of their bayonets.

The battery under the balcony of Charles IX. narrowly escaped capture, so unexpected was the attack. The Sectionists were not more than ten feet away from the guns when the gunners instinctively lowered their matches and fired.

It would be impossible to describe the horrible and bloody gap which these three guns, fired thus simultaneously, made in the closely packed ranks before them; it was like a breach in a wall. The advance of the Sectionists was so rapid, however, that even this breach did not check them. But at that moment bullets rained like hail upon the ranks of the Sectionists from the colonnade of the Louvre, which was covered with sharpshooters.

Meantime a hand-to-hand battle was being waged in the open space before the Louvre. The Sectionists were in fact

caught between two fires. All the houses in the Rue des Poulies, the Rue des Fosses-Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, and the Rue des Pretres overlooking the garden of the Infanta, vomited forth fire and death.

Morgan had promised himself to take Cartaux prisoner. He contrived to reach him, but Cartaux sought shelter behind the bayonets of his men. For a moment it was a duel to the death all along the line. The Sectionists, repulsed by the bayonets, drew back a step, reloaded their guns, fired pointblank, and then, reversing their weapons, used them as clubs, and tried to fight their way out of the circle of fire which surrounded them. But nothing could break it.

Suddenly Morgan felt something give way behind him. The artillery, which had continued its deadly work, had cut his column in two, and it was obliged to incline to the right to maintain its position near the Louvre.

There was now a large open space between the Rue de la Monnaie and the Pont-Neuf; the Sectionists, not daring to risk themselves upon the Quai du Louvre, had sought shelter behind the houses in the Rue de la Monnaie and the parapet of the Pont-Neuf. Morgan was therefore obliged to retreat; but just as he reached the upper part of the Pont-Neuf, Coster de Saint-Victor came rapidly down the Rue Guénégaud. The two young men recognized each other, uttered a cry of joy, and carrying their men with them by the mere force of example, returned with redoubled fury to that Quai du Louvre which they had been forced to abandon shortly before.

Here the same butchery recommenced. Bonaparte had taken his measures with admirable precaution, and the Louvre was impregnable. Artillery, muskets and shells rained death from every side. Folly alone could have continued such a struggle.

On the other hand, Cartaux, who saw the wavering of the Sectionists, who were in reality sustained by the courage of two men alone, ordered his men to fire for a last time, and then, forming in column, to advance at double-quick.

The Sectionists were annihilated. More than half of them were lying on the pavement. In the last rank, Morgan, with only a fragment of his sword left in his hand, and Coster de Saint-Victor, who had bound up a flesh wound in the thigh with his handkerchief, had recoiled like two lions forced to retreat before their hunters.

By half-past six everything was over, every column broken and dispersed. Two hours had sufficed to accomplish this tremendous defeat. Of the fifty thousand Sectionists who had taken part in the fight, scarcely a thousand were left, and they were scattered broadcast—some in the church of Saint-Roch, some in the Palais-Égalité, others behind the barricade in the Rue de la Loi, and others at the windows of the houses. As night was coming on, and Bonaparte wished to save the innocent from suffering with the guilty, he ordered his men to pursue the Sectionists as far as the Pont du Change and the boulevards, but with guns loaded with powder only. Their terror was so great that the noise alone would be sufficient to make them flee.

At seven in the evening Barras and Bonaparte entered the hall of the Convention together in the midst of the deputies, who laid down their weapons to clasp their hands.

"Conscript fathers," said Barras, "your enemies are no longer! You are free and the country is saved!"

Cries of "Long live Barras!" echoed on all sides. But he shook his head, and, commanding silence, continued: "The victory is not mine, citizen representatives. It is due to the prompt and skilful arrangements of my young colleague, Bonaparte."

And as the shouts of gratitude continued, gathering in vehemence because their terror had been so great, a ray of the setting sun shone across the vaulted ceiling, framing the calm, bronze head of the young victor in an aureole of purple and gold.

"Do you see?" said Chénier to Tallien, regarding the shaft of light as an omen. "If that were Brutus!"

That same evening Morgan, safe and sound by a miracle,

passed the barrier without being stopped, and took the road to Besançon. Coster de Saint-Victor, thinking that nowhere could he be better concealed than in the house of Barras's mistress, sought shelter of the beautiful Aurélie de Saint-Amour.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SWORD OF THE VICOMTE DE BEAUHARNAIS

AFTER events like these, when cannon have thundered in the public squares and blood has run in the streets of the capital, society is always thrown into a turmoil from which it takes a long time to recover.

Although the 14th Vendémiaire had sufficed to remove the most noticeable traces of the combat as well as the corpses, the people continued for a long time to discuss that terrible day, which had resulted in restoring to the Convention threatened with destruction—that is to say, to the Revolution and its authors — the power which they needed to establish those institutions, fear of which had produced the event which we have just related.

The Convention understood so thoroughly on the morning of the 14th that its power was fully restored, that it did not trouble itself as to what had become of the Sectionaries, who had disappeared without leaving any trace of their passage other than the blood they had shed, and which had disappeared during the following day, if not from the memories of the citizens, at least from the pavement of the streets.

They contented themselves with dismissing the staff of the National Guard, disbanding the chasseurs and grenadiers, who were almost all young men, placing the National Guard under the orders of Barras, or rather his young colleague, Bonaparte, to whom the former had abandoned almost all the active part of the work. They also commanded the disarming of the Section Le Peletier, and the Section

Théâtre Français, and finally formed three commissions to try the leading members of the Sectionists, who had almost entirely disappeared.

Anecdotes of the day were related for some time—this day which was destined to leave so lasting and bloody an impression upon the minds of Parisians. The magnificent words which had fallen from the lips of the wounded, or rather from the wounds themselves, on that day of supreme patriotism, were repeated and extolled. They told how the wounded, who had been carried to the Convention in the Salle des Victoires, which had been transformed into a hospital, had been cared for by the gentle hands of the wives and daughters of the members of the Convention, who assumed the role of Sisters of Charity.

They praised Barras for choosing his second with such unerring judgment at the first glance, and that second, who, unknown to them on the previous evening, had burst upon them like a god from the midst of thunder and lightning.

Descending from this brilliant pedestal, Bonaparte remained general of the interior; and to be within reach of the staff, who had their headquarters on the Boulevard des Capucines, in what had formerly been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he took two rooms in the Hôtel de la Concorde, Rue Neuve-des-Capucines.

A young man was introduced into the room which he used for a study, under the name of Eugene de Beauharnais.

Although he was already besieged by petitioners, Bonaparte had not yet reached the point of drawing a sharp line as to whom he would or would not receive. Besides, the name of Beauharnais awakened only pleasing memories. He therefore gave orders that the young man was to be admitted.

For those of our readers who have already seen him at Strasbourg some three years earlier, it will suffice to say that he was a handsome young man of sixteen or seventeen years of age.

He had large eyes, thick black hair, red lips, white teeth, and aristocratic hands and feet—a mark of distinction which

the general immediately noticed—and apart from the embarrassment inseparable from a first interview, he had that attractive modesty which is so becoming in youth, above all when its possessor appears as a supplicant.

From the time he entered the room Bonaparte watched him attentively, which did not tend to lessen Eugene's timidity.

But suddenly shaking the feeling off as if it were unworthy of him, he raised his head, and, drawing himself up, said: "After all, I do not see why I should hesitate to proffer a request which is both pious and loyal."

"I am listening," said Bonaparte.

"I am the son of the Vicomte de Beauharnais."

"Of the citizen-general," corrected Bonaparte gently.

"Of the citizen-general, if you prefer," said the young man, "and if you insist upon Republican forms."

"I insist upon nothing," replied Bonaparte, "save that which is clear and concise."

"Well," resumed the young man, "I come to ask at your hands, citizen-general, the sword of my father, Alexandre de Beauharnais, who was a general like yourself. I am sixteen years old, and my military education is almost completed. It is for me to serve my country now. I hope some day to wear at my side the sword which my father wore. That is why I have come to ask you for it."

Bonaparte, who liked clear, precise replies, was much prepossessed by this firm, intelligent language.

"If I should ask you for more information concerning yourself and your family, citizen," asked Bonaparte, "would you attribute the request to curiosity or to the interest with which you have inspired me?"

"I should prefer to think that the report of our misfortunes had reached your ears," replied the young man, "and that it is to that I owe the kindness with which you have received me."

"Was not your mother a prisoner also?" asked Bonaparte.

"Yes, and she was saved almost by a miracle. We owe her life to citizeness Tallien and to citizen Barras."

Bonaparte reflected a moment. "How does your father's sword happen to be in my hands?"

"I do not say that it is in your hands, but you can have it restored to me, though. The Convention ordered the disarming of the Section Le Peletier. We are living in our old house in the Rue Neuve-des-Mathurins, which the general had restored to us. Some men came to my mother and asked for all the weapons in the house. My mother gave orders that they should take a double-barrelled hunting gun of mine, a single-barrelled rifle which I bought at Strasbourg, and finally my father's sword. I regretted neither the double-barrelled gun nor the rifle, though I took pride in the memories which they recalled. But I regretted, and I confess still regret, that sword which fought so gloriously in America and France."

"If you were to see the weapons which formerly belonged to you," said Bonaparte, "you would probably recognize them."

"Beyond doubt," replied Eugene.

Bonaparte rang and a sub-officer entered.

"Accompany citizen Beauharnais to the rooms where they have put the arms belonging to the Sections," said Bonaparte. "You will allow him to take those which he will point out to you."

And he held out his hand to the young man, the hand which was to lift him so high. Ignorant of the future, Eugene darted toward it and kissed it gratefully.

"Ah, citizen!" said he, "my mother and sister shall know how good you have been to me, and, believe me, they will appreciate it as much as I do."

Just then the door opened and Barras entered without being announced.

"Ah!" said he, "here I am on ground with which I am doubly familiar!"

"I have already told citizen Bonaparte how much we

owe you," replied Eugene, "and I am happy to repeat before you, that without your protection the widow and children of General Beauharnais would probably have died of hunger."

"Died of hunger!" said Bonaparte, laughing. "That is a death which only those officers whom Aubry has placed on the retired list need fear."

"I was indeed wrong," said Eugene. "For while my mother was in prison, I worked with a carpenter where I earned my daily bread, and my sister was with a seamstress who supported her out of charity."

"Well," said Barras, "the bad days are over and the good ones have returned. What has brought you here, my young friend?"

Eugene told Barras the reason of his visit.

"Why did you not come to me," asked Barras, "instead of disturbing my colleague?"

"Because I wished to meet citizen-general Bonaparte," replied Eugene. "It seemed to me that it would be a good omen if he returned me my father's sword."

And, bowing to the two generals, he went out with the officer, much less embarrassed than when he had come.

CHAPTER XXV

THE MAP OF MARENGO

THE two generals were left alone. Both had followed the young man with their eyes, each one inspired with different thoughts, until the door had closed upon him.

"That boy has a heart of gold," said Barras. "Just think, when he was only thirteen years and a half old—I did not know him then—he went to Strasbourg alone in the hope of finding some papers there which would justify his father before the revolutionary tribunal. But the revolu-

tionary tribunal was in a hurry. It cut off the father's head while it was waiting for the papers the son was collecting. It was time anyway for Eugene to return, for had it not been for Saint-Just, whom he met there, I do not know what might have happened to Eugene. He attacked Tétrell, one of the leaders, who was twice as big as he, in the midst of a play at the theatre. If the people, who had seen him during the day when he was fighting against the Prussians, had not taken his part boldly, the poor boy would have been badly singed."

"I suppose," said Bonaparte, always precise, "that you did not put yourself out to come here for the purpose of discussing this young man, since you did not know that he had come to see me."

"No," said Barras, "I came to make you a present."

"Me?"

"Yes, you," said Barras. And going to the door of the antechamber, he opened it and made a sign. Two men entered. They were carrying an immense piece of rolled canvas on their shoulders as two carpenters would carry a beam.

"Goodness! what is that?" asked Bonaparte.

"You have often spoken to me of your desire to make a campaign in Italy, general."

"You mean," interrupted Bonaparte, "of the necessity which will some day arise for France to decide the Austrian question."

"Well, for some time Carnot, who is of your opinion, has been occupied in making the most complete map of Italy which exists in the world. I asked for it at the Ministry of War, and, although they were inclined to refuse, they finally gave it to me, and I give it to you."

Bonaparte seized Barras's hand, and said: "This is indeed a present, especially if it is given to me as the man who is to make use of it. Open it," he continued, addressing the men who were carrying it.

They knelt down and untied the cords, but when they

tried to unroll it they found that the room was not half large enough to hold it.

"Good!" exclaimed Bonaparte, "here I am forced to build a house to hold your present."

"Oh!" replied Barras, "when the time comes for you to use it, you may be living in a house which is large enough for you to hang it between two windows. In the meantime look at the part which is unrolled. Not a hill, not a brook is wanting."

The porters opened the map as far as the space permitted. The portion which they uncovered extended across the Gulf of Genoa, from Ajaccio to Savona.

"By the way," said Bonaparte, "is that not where Schérer, Masséna, and Kellermann are—here at Cervoni?"

"Yes," replied Barras, "we received word to that effect only this evening. How could I have forgotten to tell you! Augereau has won a great victory at Loano. Masséna and Joubert, whom Kellermann kept in his army despite the order of their dismissal which the Committee of Public Safety forwarded him, displayed magnificent courage."

"It is not there, it is not there," murmured Bonaparte. "What do blows aimed at the limbs amount to? Nothing! They should aim at the heart. Milan, Mantua, Verona, those are the places to strike. Ah! if ever—"

"What?" asked Barras.

"Nothing," replied Bonaparte. Then, turning brusquely to Barras, he asked: "Are you sure to be appointed one of the five directors?"

"Yesterday," replied Barras, lowering his voice, "the Conventionals met to decide upon the members of the Directory. They argued for some time, and the names which successfully passed the first test, are: Mine, then Rewbell, Sièyes third, then La Reveillière-Lepaux, and Letourneur; but one of the five will certainly not accept."

"Who is the ambitious one?"

"Sièyes."

"Is there any talk of the man who will replace him?"

"In all probability it will be Carnot."

"You will lose nothing by that. But why not introduce some name like Pichegru, Kléber, Hoche or Moreau, among all those names of civilians?"

"They were afraid of giving the military too much power."

Bonaparte began to laugh.

"Nonsense!" he said. "When Cæsar took Rome he was neither tribune nor consul; he had just returned from Gaul, where he had won eighty battles and subdued three hundred tribes. That is the way dictators have. But none of the men we have just mentioned is built on the plan of a Cæsar. If the five men you have named are chosen you will go on well enough. You have popularity, talent for the initiative, and activity; you will naturally be the leading man of the Directory. Rewbell and Letourneur are men who will do the work, while you represent the people. La Reveillière-Lepaux is wise and honest and will furnish the morality for you all. As for Carnot, I do not quite know what part of the work you will assign to him."

"He will continue to make plans and to lay off victories on paper," said Barras.

"Let him make as many plans as he pleases. But if ever I have any command of importance, do not take the trouble to send them to me."

"Why not?"

"Because battles are not won with a map, a pair of compasses, and red, blue or green-headed pins. It needs instinct, an unerring glance, genius. I should like to know if Hannibal had plans of the battles of Trebbia, of Lake Trassymene, and of Cannes sent him from Carthage. I snap my fingers at your plans! Do you know what you ought to do? You ought to give me the details which you have received concerning the battle of Loano; and, since this map is unrolled at that very place, I would be interested in following the movements of our troops and the Austrians."

Barras drew from his pocket a note written with the laconism of a telegraphic despatch and handed it to Bonaparte.

"Patience," said he; "you have the map, and the command will follow, perhaps."

Bonaparte read the despatch eagerly.

"Good!" said he. "Loano is the key to Genoa, and Genoa is the magazine of Italy." Then, continuing to read the despatch, he said: "Masséna, Kellermann, Joubert, what men! and what could not a man do with them! He who could bring them together and make the most of their diverse qualities would be the veritable Olympian Jove with the thunderbolt in his hand!"

Then he murmured the names of Hoche, Kléber and Moreau, and, with a pair of compasses in his hand, he stretched himself out upon the great map, of which only one corner was uncovered. There he began to study the marches and counter-marches which had led up to the famous battle of Loano. When Barras took his departure, Bonaparte scarcely noticed it, so absorbed was he in his strategic combinations.

"It cannot have been Schérer," he said, "who devised and executed this movement. Neither can it have been Carnot; there is too great an element of the unexpected about it. It was doubtless Masséna."

He had been lying upon this map, which was never to leave him, for about half an hour, when the door opened and a voice announced: "The citizeness Beauharnais."

Bonaparte, in his abstraction, thought he heard the words, "The citizen Beauharnais," and, imagining that it was the young man whom he had already seen who had returned to thank him for the favor which he had just granted him, he exclaimed: "Let him come in, let him come in!"

As he spoke, there appeared at the door, not only the young man whom he had already seen, but also a charming woman of about twenty-seven or eight years of age. He

half rose in his astonishment, and it was thus, with one knee on the ground, that Bonaparte first saw Marie-Rose-Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie, the widow of Beauharnais.

CHAPTER XXVI

MARIE-ROSE-JOSEPHINE TASCHER DE LA PAGERIE, VICOMTESSE BEAUHARNAIS

BONAPARTE paused as if smitten with admiration. Madame de Beauharnais, at the time of which we are writing, was, as we have said, about twenty-seven years of age, of indisputable beauty, with a charming grace of manner, exhaling from her whole person that subtle fascination which resembles the perfume which Venus gave to her chosen ones to inspire love.

Her hair and eyes were black, her nose was straight, her mouth a smiling curve; the oval outline of her face was irreproachable. Her neck was set gracefully upon her shoulders, her figure was flexible and undulating, her arm was perfectly shaped, and her hand beautiful beyond comparison.

Nothing could have been more attractive than her Creole accent, of which she had retained only sufficient trace to betray her tropical birth.

As her maiden name indicated, Madame de Beauharnais belonged to a noble family. Born at Martinique, her education, like that of all Creoles, was left entirely to herself; but rare qualities of mind and heart had made of Mademoiselle Tascher de la Pagerie one of the most cultivated women of any age. Her kind heart had taught her early in life that, although they had wool on their heads, the negroes were more to be pitied than other men, since, through the power and cupidity of the whites, they had been torn from their own country and transferred to a land where they suffered constantly, and not infrequently were killed by cruelty.

The thing that attracted her attention was the plight of these unhappy men. All their family ties were sundered, but brothers in toil they stood with bent backs, toiling beneath the rays of the sun, delving in a soil which their blood and their sweat fertilized, but not for themselves.

She asked herself in her youthful intelligence, why these men had been placed beyond the pale of the law? Why they should vegetate, naked, without shelter, without property, honor, liberty? and she herself found the answer—that all this was to enrich avaricious masters, who, from infancy, condemned this race to a life of hopeless and unending torture. And young Josephine's pity had influenced her parents, at least, to make an earthly paradise for the slaves.

They were still white and black; but almost to the extent of being free, these blacks shared in all the advantages and some of the pleasures of life. And, while nowhere in the island were the negroes sure of marrying the women of their choice, marriages for love rewarded with affectionate and faithful service more surely their young mistress Josephine than was the case with any of the other slave owners.

She was about thirteen years old when a young officer of great merit and noble birth arrived at Martinique, and became acquainted with her at her Aunt Renaudin's house.

This was the Vicomte de Beauharnais.

The one possessed in his person everything calculated to please. She possessed in heart everything destined to inspire love. They loved each other therefore with all the ardor of two young people who have the delight of realizing their dreams of kindred souls.

"I have chosen you," said Alexandre, pressing her hand tenderly.

"And I have found you," replied Josephine, holding up her forehead to him to kiss.

Her Aunt Renaudin felt that it would be opposing the decrees of Providence to forbid the loves of the two young people. Their relatives were all in France. Their consent was necessary in order to consummate this marriage to which

Aunt Renaudin saw no obstacle. Obstacles were raised, however, by Messieurs de Beauharnais, the father and uncle of the young man. In an access of fraternal affection they had once promised each other that their children should marry each other. He whom the young Creole already regarded as her husband was therefore the destined spouse of another, and that other his cousin.

Alexandre's father yielded first. When he saw the despair into which his refusal had plunged the young people, he himself agreed to go to his brother and tell him of the change which threatened to upset their plans. But the latter was less kindly in disposition, and informed his brother that while he might be willing to break his word, a thing unworthy of a gentleman, he, the brother, would not acquiesce in any such arrangement.

The vicomte's father came away in despair at having quarreled with his brother, but he not only renewed his promise to consent, he actually did consent.

It was then that the young Josephine, who was later to give the world an example of such heroic self-sacrifice and absolute devotion, sounded the prelude as it were to the great divorce scene. She insisted that the vicomte should sacrifice his passion for her to the tranquillity and welfare of his family.

She informed the vicomte that she wished to have an interview with his uncle, and accompanied him to M. de Beauharnais's house. She bade him enter a smaller room, adjacent to the one where M. de Beauharnais, marvelling at her visit, had consented to receive her. M. de Beauharnais rose, for he was a gentleman and was receiving a lady.

"Sir," said she, "you do not, and you cannot love me; but what do you know of me that you should hate me? Whence comes this hatred which you have declared for me, and what justifies it? Certainly not my affection for the Vicomte de Beauharnais, for that is pure and legitimate, and is returned by him. When we first revealed our love to each other we were ignorant that social obligations

and family interest, of which I knew nothing, could make that confession of love a crime. Well, Monsieur de Beauharnais, all our faults, and above all mine, hinge upon this marriage which was planned by my aunt and agreed to by M. de Beauharnais. Alexandre and I, more considerate of your wishes than of our own happiness, have the terrible courage to sacrifice that happiness to you. If he and I renounce this marriage, which prevents the one you have at heart, will you still think your nephew unworthy of your friendship and deem me deserving of your scorn?"

The Marquis de Beauharnais, amazed at what he had heard, studied Mademoiselle Tascher de la Pagerie for some time in silence; but not being able to credit the sincerity of her remarks, he retorted, concealing with a veneer of politeness the insulting nature of his remarks:

"Mademoiselle, I have heard of the beauty, the wit, and the noble sentiments of Mademoiselle Tascher de la Pagerie, always in terms of the highest praise; but this union which I feared, and in which my nephew is so well justified, or at least excusable, I find all the more blameworthy, because it is so invincible—because a rival, far from overcoming its influence, only tended to increase it, and because it was very difficult to foresee that it had the power to check its own progress. This, mademoiselle, is the spectacle which you present to-day—a spectacle so singular that, permit me to say, in order not to suspect you of the most adroit egotism and the most profound and well-acted dissimulation, I must have recourse to a third supposition, which you will perhaps resent just because it is a natural one."

"What is that supposition, sir?" asked Mademoiselle de la Pagerie.

"That you have either ceased to love my nephew or that he no longer loves you."

The vicomte, who had been listening with mingled grief and astonishment, opened the door and rushed into the room.

"You are mistaken, sir," he said; "she still loves me and I love her more than ever. But as she is an angel, she is

sacrificing herself and me to our families; but by misunderstanding and calumniating her you have proved that you are not worthy of the sacrifice she was willing to make. Come, Josephine, come. All that I can do, and it is my last concession, is to leave the matter to my father to decide. What he determines upon we will do."

They returned to the house, where Mademoiselle de la Pagerie related to Monsieur de Beauharnais all that had just occurred, asking for his final decision, and promising, on her own behalf and that of his son, to abide by it.

But the count, with tears in his eyes, took the hands of the two young people and said:

"Never were you more worthy of one another than when you renounced your hopes of mutual happiness. You ask my final decision. It is that you shall marry, and it is my earnest wish that you may be happy."

A week later Mademoiselle de la Pagerie became the Vicomtesse de Beauharnais.

Nothing happened to disturb the happiness of the young people until the Revolution began. The Vicomte de Beauharnais ranged himself among those who favored its adoption; only he made the mistake of thinking that the avalanche could be directed as it rushed on, carrying all before it. He was swept in its wake to the scaffold.

CHAPTER XXVII

WHERE AN ANGEL STEPS A MIRACLE IS PERFORMED

ON THE evening preceding the day on which he was to die, the Vicomte de Beauharnais wrote his wife the following letter. It was his final farewell:

Night of the 6th and 7th Thermidor.
At the Conciergerie

Yet a few moments to give to love, to tears, and to regrets, and then every thought shall be devoted to the glory of my destiny and to the great dreams of immortality. When you receive this letter, oh, my Josephine, your hus-

band, in the words of this world, will long have ceased to exist; but already in the bosom of his God, he will have tasted of the joys of real life. You see therefore that you must not weep for him. The wicked men, the senseless ones who survive him, should have all your tears, for they do evil and cannot repair it.

But do not let us blacken with their guilty image these last moments. I would, on the contrary, brighten them by thinking that, beloved by an adorable wife, the short day of our wedded life has passed without the slightest cloud. Yes, our union has lasted but a day, and that reflection draws a sigh from me. But how serene and pure was that day which has vanished like a dream; and how grateful ought I to be to that Providence which must have you in its keeping! To-day that same Providence is taking me away before my time, and that is another of its favors. Can a good man live without grief, and almost remorse, when he sees the whole universe in the clutches of the wicked? I should therefore be glad to be taken away from them, were it not for the feeling that I am leaving to their tender mercies lives which are so precious and dear to me. If, however, the thoughts of the dying are trustworthy presentiments, I feel in my heart that these butcheries are soon to cease, and that the executioners will follow their victims to the scaffold. . . .

I resume these incoherent, almost illegible lines after being interrupted by my keepers. I have just undergone a cruel formality which, under other circumstances, I would rather have died than endure. But why cavil at necessity? Reason teaches us to make the best of it.

After they had cut off my hair, I bethought me of buying back a part of it, in order to leave my dear wife and children unequivocal proofs and tokens of my dying remembrance. . . . I feel my heart breaking at this thought, and my paper is wet with tears.

Farewell, all that I love. Love me, speak of me, and never forget that the glory of dying a victim of tyrants, and a martyr to the cause of liberty, makes the scaffold illustrious!

Arrested in turn, as we have already mentioned, the vicomtesse wrote to her children, just before she was to die, in the same strain. She ended a long letter, which we have before us, with these words:

For my part, my children, as I am about to die, as did your father before me, a victim to the mad excesses which he always opposed, and which finally devoured him, I leave this life with no feeling of hatred for his executioners and for my own, whom I despise.

Honor my memory even as you share my sentiments. I leave you for an inheritance the glory of your father and your mother's name, which some poor wretches have blessed —our love, our blessings, and our regrets.

Madame de Beauharnais was finishing this letter when she heard shouts of "Death to Robespierre! Long live Liberty!" in the courtyard. It was the morning of the 10th Thermidor.

Three days later Madame de Beauharnais, thanks to the friendship of Madame Tallien, was free; and a month later, through the influence of Barras, such of her property as had not been sold was restored to her. The house in the Rue Neuve-des-Mathurins, No. 11, was a part of this property.

When her son, who had not told her of his intention, returned with his father's sword in his hand, and told her of the circumstances attendant upon its return, in the first burst of enthusiasm she left her house, and, having only the boulevard to cross, hastened to thank the young general, who was much astonished at her appearance.

Bonaparte held out his hand to the beautiful widow, more beautiful than ever in the mourning robes which she had worn ever since her husband's death. Then he made a sign to her to step over the map and take a seat in that part of the room which was not encumbered by it.

Josephine replied that she had come on foot and that she did not dare to put her dainty little shoe upon the map for fear of soiling it.

But Bonaparte insisted, and with the assistance of his hand, she sprang over the Gulf of Genoa, the toe of her shoe making a mark where it touched the little town of Voltri.

An armchair was standing on the other side. Josephine seated herself in it, and Bonaparte, who had remained stand-

ing near her, partly from respect and partly from admiration, put his knee on another chair and leaned with his arms on the back.

Bonaparte was at first embarrassed. He was not accustomed to society, and had rarely talked with women; but he knew that there are three things to which their hearts are always alive—country, youth, and love. He therefore talked to Madame de Beauharnais of Martinique, of her relatives, and of her husband. An hour slipped by, which, clever mathematician that he was, seemed no longer than a few minutes to him.

They spoke little of the present state of affairs, but Bonaparte noticed that Madame de Beauharnais seemed to stand in close relations with all those who were in power, or who seemed likely to attain to it, her husband having been a prominent exponent of the reactionary opinions which were then in high favor.

For her part, Madame de Beauharnais was too clear-sighted a woman not to detect, for all his innate eccentricity, the powerful intellect of the victor of the 13th Vendémiaire.

This complete and rapid success had made of Bonaparte the hero of the day. He had often been mentioned in Madame de Beauharnais's presence; and curiosity and enthusiasm had prompted her, as we have said, to pay him this visit. She found that Barras's protégé was intellectually far beyond what Barras had claimed for him, so that when her servant came to tell her that Madame Tallien was waiting for her at her house, to go, she knew where, as they had planned, she exclaimed: "But our appointment was for five o'clock."

"And it is now six," said the lackey, bowing.

"Heavens!" said she in surprise; "what shall I say to her?"

"Tell her, madame,' said Bonaparte, "that your conversation charmed me so greatly that I prevailed upon you with my entreaties to give me another quarter of an hour."

"That is bad advice," said Josephine; "for in that case I should have to say what is not true in order to excuse myself."

"Let me see," said Bonaparte, anxious that she should prolong her visit for a few moments, "was Madame Tallien contemplating another 9th Thermidor? I thought the days of Robespierre were gone forever."

"If I were not ashamed to make the confession, I would tell you where we are going."

"Tell me, madame. I shall be delighted to share a secret with you, especially one which you are ashamed to confess."

"Are you superstitious?" asked Madame de Beauharnais.

"I am a Corsican, madame."

"Then you will not make fun of me. Yesterday we visited Madame Gohier, and she told us that when she was passing through Lyons ten years or more ago, she had had her fortune told by a young woman named Lenormand. Among other predictions which this fortune-teller made her, she said that she would love a man whom she could not marry, and would marry a man whom she did not love, but that after this marriage she would become very much attached to the man she had married. That has been precisely what has happened. Now she has heard that this sibyl, named Lenormand, is living in Paris in the Rue Tournon, No. 7. Madame Tallien and I were curious to see her; and she agreed to come to my house, where we are to disguise ourselves as grisettes. The appointment was, as I have said, for half-past five; it is now a quarter past six. I must go and make my excuses to Madame Tallien, change my dress, and, if she still wishes it, go with her to Mademoiselle Lenormand's. I confess that we flatter ourselves, thanks to our disguise, that we shall be able to mislead the prophetess completely."

"You have no use for a companion, a locksmith, a blacksmith, or a gunsmith, I suppose?" said Bonaparte.

"No, citizen," said Madame de Beauharnais. "I regret

to say we have not. I have already been indiscreet in telling you of our plan. It would be far more so to permit you to accompany us."

"Your will be done, madame, on earth as it is in heaven," said Bonaparte.

And giving her his hand to lead her to the door, this time he avoided letting her step upon the beautiful map, upon which her foot, light as it was, had left its trace.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SIBYL

AS SHE had told the young general, Madame de Beauharnais found Madame Tallien waiting for her.

Madame Tallien (Thérèse Cabarus) was, as everybody knows, the daughter of a Spanish banker. She was married to M. Davis de Fontenay, a councillor of the parliament of Bordeaux, but was soon divorced from him. This was at the beginning of '94, when the Terror was at its height.

Thérèse Cabarus wished to rejoin her father, who was in Spain, in order to escape the evils of which proscription was the least. Arrested at the gates of the city, she was brought before Tallien, who fell passionately in love with her at first sight. She made use of this passion to save a great number of victims. At this time love was the most powerful opponent of its rival, death.

Tallien was recalled, and Thérèse Cabarus followed him to Paris, where she was arrested; from the depths of her prison she brought about the 9th Thermidor, after which she was free.

It will be remembered that her first care had been to secure the liberty of her companion in prison, Josephine de Beauharnais.

From that time the two women had been inseparable.

One woman only in Paris disputed the palm of beauty with them; and that woman was Madame Récamier.

This evening, as we know, they had decided to go to the fashionable sibyl, Mademoiselle Lenormand, disguised as maids, and under assumed names. In a twinkling the two great ladies were transformed into two charming grisettes.

Their lace caps fell over their eyes, and the hood of a little silk mantle hid the head; clad in short dresses of India muslin, and bravely shod with shoes with paste buckles and stockings embroidered with pink and green, which their skirts did not hide, they jumped into a hired carriage, which they had ordered to stop at the great gate of the house No. 11, Rue Neuve-des-Mathurins. Then, in a trembling voice, like that of all women who are doing something out of the ordinary, Madame de Beauharnais said to the driver: "Rue du Tournon, No. 7."

The carriage stopped at the place indicated, the driver got down from his seat, opened the door, received his fare, and knocked at the house-door, which was opened at once.

The two women hesitated an instant, as if their hearts failed them at the critical moment. But Madame Tallien urged her friend on. Josephine, light as a bird, alighted upon the pavement without touching the step; Madame Tallien followed her. They crossed the formidable threshhold, and the door closed behind them.

They found themselves under a sort of porte-cochère, the arch of which extended into the court. At the further end, by the light of a reflector, they saw these words written on an outside shutter: "Mademoiselle Lenormand, bookseller."

They advanced toward this light, which revealed a short flight of four steps. They went up the four steps and came to a porter's lodge.

"Citizeness Lenormand?" inquired Madame Tallien, who, although the younger of the two, seemed on this occasion to take the initiative.

"Ground floor, left-hand door," replied the porter.

Madame Tallien went up the steps first, holding up her already short skirt, which discovered a leg that might vie with a Greek statue in shape, which had, nevertheless. condescended this evening to the grisette's garter tied below the knee. Madame de Beauharnais followed, admiring her friend's free and easy manner, but unable to emulate it. She was still only half-way up the steps when Madame Tallien rang the bell. An old servant opened the door.

The new arrivals, whose faces were more of a recommendation than their attire, were examined with the most scrupulous minuteness by the lackey, who bade them sit down in a corner of the first room. The second, which was a salon, and through which the lackey had to pass to reach his mistress, was occupied by two or three women whose rank it would have been difficult to determine, all ranks at that time being practically merged into that of the bourgeois. But to their great astonishment, the door of the second salon opened after a few moments, and Mademoiselle Lenormand herself came and spoke to them, saying:

"Ladies, be good enough to enter the salon."

The two pretended grisettes looked at each other in astonishment. Mademoiselle Lenormand was supposed to make her predictions in a state of somnambulism. Was this true, and had she, by reason of her second-sight, recognized, even without seeing them, two ladies of rank in the supposed grisettes whom the lackey had announced?

At the same time, Mademoiselle Lenormand signed to the ladies in the first salon to pass into the second room, where she told fortunes.

Madame Tallien and Madame de Beauharnais began to examine the room in which they had been left. Its principal ornaments were two portraits, one of Louis XVI. and the other of Marie-Antoinette. Notwithstanding the terrible days that had passed, and the fact that the heads of the originals had fallen upon the scaffold, the portraits had not left their places, and had not for an instant ceased to be

treated with the respect which Mademoiselle Lenormand entertained for the originals.

After the portraits, the most remarkable thing in the room was a long table covered with a cloth, upon which sparkled necklaces, rings, and pieces of silverware elegantly wrought; most of the last dating from the eighteenth century. All of these trinkets had been given to the sibyl by persons to whom she had doubtless made agreeable predictions which had been fulfilled.

The door of the cabinet opened shortly, and the last person who had arrived before the two ladies was called. The friends remained alone.

A quarter of an hour passed, during which they conversed in subdued tones, then the door opened again, and Mademoiselle Lenormand came out.

"Which of you ladies wishes to come in first?" she asked.

"Can we not go in together?" asked Madame de Beauharnais quickly.

"Impossible, madame," replied the sibyl; "I have sworn never to read the cards for one person in the presence of another."

"May we know why?" asked Madame Tallien, with her customary vivacity, and we may almost say her usual indiscretion.

"Because in a portrait which I had the misfortune to draw too near to life one of two ladies whom I was receiving recognized her husband."

"Go in, Thérèse; go in," said Madame de Beauharnais, urging her friend.

"So I am always to be the one to sacrifice myself," said the latter. And then, smiling at her friend, she said: "Well, so be it; I will risk it." And she entered.

Mademoiselle Lenormand was at that time a woman of from twenty-four to twenty-nine years of age, short and stout in figure, and vainly endeavoring to disguise the fact that one shoulder was higher than the other; she wore a

turban adorned with a bird of paradise. Her hair fell in long curls around her face. She wore two skirts, one over the other; one was short, scarcely falling to the knees, and pearl-gray in color; the other was longer, falling in a short train behind her, and was cherry-red.

Beside her on a cushion lay her favorite greyhound, named Aza.

The table upon which she made her calculations was nothing but a common round table covered with a green baize cloth, with drawers in front, in which the sibyl stowed her various apparatus. The cabinet was as long as the salon, but narrower. An oak bookcase ran along the wall on each side of the door, filled with books. Facing her seat was an armchair for the person who was consulting her.

Between her and the subject lay a steel rod, which was called the divining-rod. The end, pointing toward the client, was tipped with a little coiled steel serpent; the other end resembled a riding-whip.

This was what Madame de Beauharnais saw during the brief moment that the door was open to admit her friend.

Josephine took up a book, drew near to the lamp, and tried to read; but her attention was soon diverted by the sound of a bell and the entrance of another person.

It was a young man dressed in the height of the fashion adopted by the incroyables. Between his hair, which fell to a level with his eyebrows, his dog's-ears falling over his shoulders, and his neckcloth, which reached to his cheekbones, one could scarcely distinguish a straight nose, a firm and resolute mouth, and eyes as brilliant as black diamonds.

He bowed without speaking, twirled his gnarled stick three or four times around his head, hummed three false notes, as if he were just finishing a tune, and sat down in a corner.

But although this griffin's eye, as Dante would have said, was hardly visible in the corner, Madame de Beauharnais was beginning to feel uncomfortable under its stare, al-

though the incroyable was seated at one end of the salon and she at the other. But just then Madame Tallien came out.

"Ah! my dear," she said, going straight to her friend, without seeing the incroyable, who sat in the shadow—"ah! my dear, go in quickly. Mademoiselle Lenormand is charming; just guess what she has predicted for me?"

"Why, my dear," replied Madame Beauharnais, "that you will be loved, that you will be beautiful until you are fifty years of age, and that you will have love-affairs all your life—"

And as Madame Tallien made a movement as if to say, "No, not that," she continued: "And that you will have a tall footman, a fine house, beautiful carriages, and white or bay horses."

"I shall have all that, my dear; and, furthermore, if our sibyl is to be believed, I shall be a princess."

"I congratulate you sincerely, my beautiful princess," said Josephine; "but as I do not see that there is anything left for me to ask for, and as I shall probably never be a princess, and my pride already suffers at being less beautiful than you, I will not give it further cause for envy, which might make us quarrel."

"Are you in earnest, dear Josephine?"

"No; but I will not expose myself to the inferiority which threatens me on all sides. I leave you your principality; let us run away."

She made a movement as if to go away, and to take Madame Tallien with her; but just then a hand was placed lightly on her arm, and a voice said: "Remain, madame, and perhaps when you have heard me, you will find that you have nothing to envy your friend."

Josephine greatly desired to know what was in store for her that would exalt her so that she would have no need to envy a princess. She therefore yielded, and entered Mademoiselle Lenormand's cabinet in her turn.

CHAPTER XXIX

FORTUNE-TELLING

MADEMOISELLE LENORMAND motioned to Josephine to seat herself in the chair which Madame Tallien had just vacated, and then she drew a fresh pack of cards from a drawer—probably that the destinies of one should not influence the other. Then she looked fixedly at Madame de Beauharnais.

"You sought to deceive me," she said, "by coming to consult me in vulgar attire. I am a clairvoyant, and I saw you leave a house in the centre of Paris; I saw you finally in the anteroom when your place was in the salon, and I came to look for you. Do not seek to deceive me; answer my questions frankly, and since you have come in search of truth, tell the truth."

Madame de Beauharnais bowed.

"If you care to question me I am ready to reply."

"What animal do you like best?"

"The dog."

"What flower do you prefer?"

"The rose."

"What perfume pleases you the best?"

"That of the violet."

The sibyl placed before Madame de Beauharnais a pack of cards almost double the size of ordinary ones. These had not been invented more than a month, and were called the "great oracle."

"Let us see first where you are placed," said the sibyl.

And, turning over the pack, she separated the cards with the wand and found the consulting client; that is to say, a brunette in a white dress with a broad, embroidered flounce, and a cloak of red velvet with a long flowing train. She was placed between the eight of hearts and the ten of clubs.

"Chance has placed you well, as you see, madame. The eight of hearts has three different meanings in as many different rows. The first, which is the eight of hearts itself, represents the conjunction of the stars under which you were born. The second, an eagle carrying away a toad from a pond, over which he is hovering. The third, a female near a tomb. This is what I see, madame, in the first card. You were born under the influence of Venus and the moon. You have recently had a very satisfactory experience, almost in the nature of a triumph. Finally, this woman dressed in black near a tomb indicates that you are a widow. On the other hand, the ten of clubs promises success in an undertaking which has just begun, and of which you are scarcely cognizant. It would be impossible to find a more fortunate throw of cards."

Then, taking up the pack and shuffling them, Mademoiselle Lenormand asked Madame de Beauharnais to cut them with her left hand, and to draw fourteen cards, which she was to place in any order she chose beside the brunette, from right to left, as Orientals write.

Madame de Beauharnais obeyed, and cut and arranged the cards as requested.

Mademoiselle Lenormand followed them with her eyes, more attentively than Madame de Beauharnais, as the latter turned them.

"In truth, madame, you are fortunate," said she; "and I am convinced that you did well not to be frightened by the prediction which I made to your friend, brilliant though it was. Your first card is the five of diamonds; beside it I find the beautiful constellation of the Southern Cross, which is invisible to us here in Europe. The main subject of the card, a Greek or Mohammedan traveller, indicates that you were born either in the East or the colonies. The parrot, or the orange tree, which forms the third subject, makes me incline to the colonies. The flower, which is a veratrum, very common in Martinique, would almost justify me in saying that you were born in that island."

"You are not mistaken, madame."

"Your third card, the nine of diamonds, makes me think that you left the island when still very young. The convolvulus, which figures on the lower part of the card, and which is the symbol of a woman seeking for something to cling to, would indicate that you left the island to be married."

"That is also true, madame," said Josephine.

"Your fourth card, which is the ten of spades, indicates the loss of your hopes; but the fruits and flowers of the saxifrage which are on the same card suggest that the disappointment was but momentary, and that a happy conclusion—probably a marriage—succeeded fears which amounted even to loss of hope."

"If you had read in the book of my own life, madame, you could not have seen more clearly."

"That encourages me," said the sibyl; "for I see such strange things in your cards that I should stop short if your denial were added to my own doubts."

"Here is the eight of spades. Achilles is dragging Hector, chained to his car, around the walls of Troy; lower down a woman is kneeling before a tomb. Your husband, like the Trojan hero, must have died a violent death, probably upon the scaffold. But here is a singular thing, on the same card: opposite the weeping woman the bones of Pelops are crossed above the talisman of the moon, which means, 'Happy fatality.' To a great misfortune will succeed good fortune which is even greater."

Josephine smiled.

"That belongs to the future and therefore I cannot answer for it."

"You have two children?" asked the sibyl.

"Yes, madame."

"A son and a daughter?"

"Yes."

"See here on the same card, the ten of diamonds, your son takes a resolution without consulting you, which is of the greatest importance, not in itself, but in its results.

"On the bottom of this card is one of the talking oaks of the forest of Dodona, as you see; Jason is lying in its shade and listening. What does he hear? The voice of the future which your son heard when he decided upon that step which he has just taken.

"The card which follows, the knave of diamonds, shows you Achilles disguised as a woman at the court of Lycomenes. The glitter of a sword will make a man of him. Is there something about a sword that has occurred between your son and some other person?"

"Yes, madame."

"Well, here at the bottom of the card is Juno, crying: 'Courage, young man, help will not be wanting!' I am not sure, but in this card, which is nothing less than that of a king of diamonds—but I think I see your son addressing a powerful soldier, and obtaining of him what he wants.

"The four of diamonds shows you yourself, madame, at the moment when your son is telling you of the fortunate result of his attempt. The flowers growing at the bottom of this card admonish you not to let yourself be overcome by difficulties, and that you will thereby reach the goal of your desires. And finally, madame, here is the eight of clubs, which positively indicates a marriage; placed as it is, next to the eight of hearts, which is the eagle soaring aloft with the toad in his talons, it indicates that this marriage will exalt you above the most eminent ranks of society.

"Then, if we still doubt, here is the six of hearts, which unfortunately is so rarely seen with the eight. Here is the eight and upon it the alchemist watching the transformation of the stone into gold; that is to say the ordinary life changing into one of nobility, honors, and a lofty position. See among these flower a convolvulus, twining itself around a lily shorn of its blossoms; that means, madame, that you will succeed; that you, who are simply seeking a support, will succeed—how shall I tell you?—to everything that is grandest and most powerful in France, in short to the lily

shorn of its blossoms; and, as indicated by the ten of clubs, that you will succeed to all this by passing across battlefields, where, as you see, Ulysses and Diomedes are carrying off the white horse of Rheseus, placed under the care of the talisman of Mars.

"There, madame, you will enjoy the respect and affection of the whole world. You will be the wife of this Hercules stifling the lion of the Nemean forest; that is to say the useful and courageous man who exposes himself to every danger for the good of his country. The flowers with which you are crowned are the lilac, the arum, and the immortelle, for you will represent true merit and perfect goodness."

Then, rising enthusiastically and seizing Madame de Beauharnais's hand as she fell at her feet, she said: "Madame, I know neither your name nor your rank, but I can read your future. Madame, remember me when you are—empress!"

"Empress? I? You are mad, my dear woman."

"What, madame, do you not see that your last card, the one to which the other fourteen lead, is the king of hearts, the great Charlemagne, who holds his sword in one hand and the globe in the other? Do you not see upon the same card the man of genius, who, with a book in his hand and a sphere at his feet, meditates upon the destinies of the world? And, last of all, do you not see on the two desks, placed opposite each other, the Book of Wisdom and the laws of Solon, which proves that your husband will be a legislator as well as a conqueror."

Improbable as was the prediction, the blood rushed to Josephine's head. Her eyes grew dim, her forehead was bathed with perspiration, and a shiver ran through her whole body.

"Impossible! impossible! impossible!" she murmured, and she sank back in her chair.

Then suddenly remembering that this consultation had lasted nearly an hour, and that Madame Tallien was waiting

for her, she rose, tossed her purse to Mademoiselle Lenormand without looking to see how much it contained, and darted into the salon. She seized Madame Tallien by the waist and drew her away, scarcely replying to the bow which the incroyable made to the two ladies as they passed before him.

"Well?" asked Madame Tallien, stopping Josephine on the flight of steps which led down to the courtyard.

"Well," replied Madame de Beauharnais, "that woman is crazy."

"What did she predict for you?"

"It is your turn first."

"I warn you, my dear, that I have already become accustomed to her prediction," said Madame Tallien; "she said that I would be a princess."

"Well," said Josephine, "I am not yet accustomed to mine. She said that I would be an empress."

And the two false grisettes got into their carriage.

CHAPTER XXX

THE PRETENDED INCROYABLE

AS WE have said, the two ladies, excited over their predictions, had scarcely paid any attention to the young man who was waiting his turn.

During the long session that Madame de Beauharnais had with the sibyl, Madame Tallien had tried more than once to discover to what class of incroyable the young man in question belonged. But he, evidently little inclined to respond to her attempts at conversation, had drawn his hair over his eyes, his cravat over his chin, and his dog's-ears over his cheeks, and had settled down in his chair with a sort of grunt, like a man who would not be sorry to shorten the time of waiting by a short nap.

Madame de Beauharnais's long sitting had passed thus:

Madame Tallien pretending to read, and the incroyable pretending to sleep.

But as soon as the ladies had gone out, and he had followed them with his eyes until they had disappeared, he presented himself in turn at the door of Mademoiselle Lenormand's cabinet. The appearance of this new client was so grotesque that it brought a smile to her lips.

"Mademoiselle," he said, affecting the ridiculous speech of the young dandies of the day, "will you have the goodness to tell me the fortunate or unfortunate vicissitudes which destiny has reserved for the person of your humble servant. Nor will he conceal from you that that person is so dear to him that he will learn with gratitude whatever agreeable presages you may impart to him. He must add, however, that owing to his great self-control, he will listen with equanimity to whatever catastrophes with which you may be pleased to threaten him."

Mademoiselle Lenormand looked at him anxiously for a moment. Did his indifference amount to madness, or was she dealing with one of those young men of the day who took pleasure in mocking the holiest things, and who would, therefore, have no scruple about insulting the sibyl of the Rue Tournon, firmly established though she was in the good opinion of the inhabitants of the Faubourg Saint-Germain.

"Do you wish me to cast your horoscope?" she asked.

"Yes, my horoscope—a horoscope like that which was cast at the birth of Alexander, son of Philip of Macedon. Without expecting to attain to the renown of the conqueror of Porus, and the founder of Alexandria, I intend some day to make a stir in the world. Have the goodness therefore to prepare whatever may be necessary, and to predict the best of good fortune for me."

"Citizen," said Mademoiselle Lenormand, "I employ different methods."

"Let us hear what they are," said the incroyable, thrusting his stomach forward, and slipping his thumbs into the

armholes of his waistcoat and letting his cane dangle from the cord around his wrist.

"For example, I prophesy by the whites of eggs, the analysis of coffee grounds, spotted or algebraic cards, and I sometimes read the future by means of a cock."

"The last would suit me very well," said the young man. "But we should need a living cock, and a glassful of wheat; have you got them?"

"I have them," replied Mademoiselle Lenormand. "I also use catoptromancy at times."

"I am looking for a Venetian mirror; for, as nearly as I can remember," said the young man, "catoptromancy is performed with a Venetian mirror and a drop of water spilled upon it."

"Exactly, citizen. You seem to be well informed concerning my art."

"Bah!" said the young man. "Yes, yes; I take an occasional turn at the occult sciences."

"There is also chiromancy," observed Mademoiselle Lenormand.

"Ah! that is what I want. All the other practices are more or less diabolical, while chiromancy has never been censured by the Catholic Church, being a science founded upon principles drawn from Holy Writ and transcendental philosophy. As much cannot be said for hydromancy, you will concede, citizeness, which has to do with a ring thrown into water; nor of pyromancy, which consists of placing the victim in the midst of a fire; of geomancy, which is performed by tracing cabalistic signs upon the ground; of capnomancy, where poppy seeds are thrown on burning coals; of coscinomancy, in which the hatchet, the sieve and the tongs are employed; nor, finally, of anthropomancy, in which human victims are sacrificed."

Mademoiselle watched her interlocutor with a certain uneasiness. Was he speaking seriously? Was he making fun of her? Or did he conceal beneath his assumed indifference a desire to remain unrecognized?

"Then you prefer chiromancy?" she asked.

"Yes," replied the incroyable; "for with chiromancy, were you the devil himself, or his wife Proserpine," and he bowed gallantly to Mademoiselle Lenormand, "I should not fear for the safety of my soul, since the patriarch Job has said (verse 7, chapter xxxvii.), 'God hath drawn lines in the hands of men in order that each may know his destiny.' And Solomon, the pre-eminently wise king, added: 'Length of life is marked in the right hand, and the lines of the left hand betoken wisdom and glory.' Finally we read in the prophet Isaiah, 'Your hand denotes that you will live a long time.' Here is mine, what does it say?"

As he spoke, the young incroyable took off his glove and extended a hand that was delicate and well-shaped, although thin and tanned by the sun. Its proportions were perfect, the fingers long and smooth; and he wore no rings.

Mademoiselle Lenormand took it and examined it carefully. Then her eyes turned from the young man's hand to his face.

"Sir," said she, "it must have cost your natural dignity much to clothe yourself as you have, and in so doing, you must have yielded, either to a great curiosity, or to the first expression of an unconquerable feeling. You are wearing a disguise and not your accustomed attire. Your hand is that of a soldier accustomed to wield the sword rather than to twirl the cane of an incroyable, or the switch of a dandy. Neither is this language you now affect natural to you. You know all of these sciences which you have mentioned, but you have learned them while studying others which you deemed more important. You have a taste for occult researches, but your future is not that of a Nicolas Flamel or a Cagliostro. You have asked in jest for a horoscope similar to the one which was cast at the birth of Alexander, son of Philip of Macedon. It is too late to cast the horoscope of your birth, but I can tell you what has happened to you since your birth, and what the future holds in store for you."

"Faith, you are right," said the young man in his natural voice, "and I confess that I am ill at ease in this disguise; neither, as you have said, am I accustomed to this language which I have just now used. Had you been deceived by my language and my attire, I should have said nothing, and would have left you with a shrug of the shoulders. The discovery which you have made in spite of my efforts to deceive you, proves to me that there is something in your art. I well know that it is tempting God," he added gloomily, "to seek to wrest from him the secrets of the future; but where is the man who feels within himself the power to achieve great things, who would not wish to aid, by a knowledge of the future, the events which life holds in store for him? You say that you will tell me of my past life. I ask but a few words on that score, being anxious rather to know the future. I repeat, here is my hand"

Mademoiselle Lenormand's eyes rested for a moment on the palm of his hand, then, raising her head, she said:

"You were born on an island, of a family which, though noble, has neither wealth nor renown. You left your country to be educated in France, you entered the service in a special branch, the artillery. You have gained a great victory, which was of immense use to your country, but for which you were poorly recompensed. For a time you thought of leaving France. Fortunately obstacles multiplied and you remained. You have just forced yourself into notoriety by a brilliant stroke which has assured you the support of the future Directory. This very day—and mark well the date—though it has been signalled by the most ordinary events alone, will become one of the most important landmarks of your life. Do you believe in my art now, and shall I continue?"

"Certainly," replied the pretended incroyable, "and that you may have every facility in your work, I will begin by showing you my real features."

At these words he took off his hat, threw aside his wig.

untied his cravat, and revealed that head of bronze, of which it has been said that it seemed to have been modelled from an antique medal. He frowned slightly, brushed his hair from his temples with his hand, and his eye grew stern, resolute, almost haughty, as did his voice; and he said, no longer with the lisp of the incroyable, or the gentleness of a man addressing a woman, but with the firmness of a command, as he presented his hand to the sibyl for the third time: "Look!"

CHAPTER XXXI

"MACBETH, THOU SHALT BE KING!"

MADEMOISELLE LENORMAND took the hand, which her client held out to her, with a feeling almost akin to veneration.

"Will you have the whole truth?" she asked, "or shall I tell you only the good and conceal the evil, as I would to one of those effeminate creatures, to whose nervous irritability you are sometimes subject?"

"Tell me all," said the young man briefly.

"See that you remember the order which you have given me," she said, emphasizing the word "order." "Your hand, which is the most perfect of any that I have ever seen, presents all the virtuous sentiments, and all the human weaknesses; it reveals at once the most heroic and the most hesitating of characters. Most of the lines of your palm dazzle by their brilliancy, while others seem to point to the darkest and most painful hours. I am about to reveal to you an enigma more difficult to read than the Theban Sphinx; for even as you will be greater than Œdipus, so will you be more unhappy. Shall I go on, or shall I stop?"

"Go on," he said.

"I obey you," and again she emphasized the word "obey."

"We will begin with the most powerful of the seven

planets; all seven are impressed upon your hand, and are placed in their recognized order.

"Jupiter is at the extremity of your index finger. Let us begin with him. Perhaps some confusion will result from this method of procedure, but we will bring forth order out of chaos.

"Jupiter then in your hand is placed at the extremity of your index finger, which means that you will be the friend and the enemy of the great men of this world, and among the fortunate of this age. Notice this sign in the shape of a fan on the fourth joint of this finger; it indicates that you will forcibly levy tribute upon people and kings. See this sort of grafting on the second joint, broken at its seventh branch; that means that you will occupy in succession six positions of dignity, and that you will stop at the seventh."

"Do you know what these positions are?"

"No. All that I can tell you about them is that the last is that of Emperor of the West, which is to-day in the house of Austria.

"See that star under the grating; it betokens that you have a good genius who will watch over you until your eighth lustre, or until you are forty years old. At that time you will probably forget that Providence chose a companion for you, for you will abandon that companion, as a result of a false calculation of human prosperity. The two signs directly beneath that star, which resemble, the one a horseshoe, and the other a chessboard, indicate that after long prosperity you will inevitably fall, and from the greatest height to which man has ever attained. You will fall rather through the influence of women than the strength of men. Four lustres will be the term of your triumph and power.

"This other sign, at the foot of Jupiter, accompanied by these three other stars, indicate that during the last three years of your greatness and prosperity, your enemies will be trying to undermine you, and that three months will suffice to hurl you from your exalted position, and that the

crash of your fall will resound throughout the East and the West. Shall I go on?"

"Go on!" said the young man.

"These two stars at the extremity of the middle finger, which is the finger of Saturn, indicate positively that you will be crowned in the same metropolis which has witnessed the coronations of the kings of France, your predecessors. But the sign of Saturn, placed immediately below these two stars, and governing them, is of the gloomiest import for you.

"On the second joint of this middle finger there are two signs, which are peculiar in that they seem to contradict each other. The triangle denotes a curious, suspicious man, not at all lavish of his means except to his soldiers, and who during his life will receive three wounds: the first on the thigh, the second on the heel, and the third on the little finger. The second of these signs, a star, denotes a magnanimous sovereign, a lover of the beautiful, forming gigantic projects, which are not only impossible of realization, but which none but he would be capable of conceiving.

"This line, which resembles an S, winding over the middle joint, forebodes, besides various other perils, several attempts at assassination, among which there is a prearranged explosion.

"The straight line, the letters C and X, which extend almost to the root of the finger of Saturn, betoken a second alliance, more illustrious than the first."

"But," interrupted the young man, impatiently, "this is the second or third time that you have spoken of this first alliance which is to protect the first eight lustres of my life. How am I to recognize the lady when I see her?"

"She is dark," replied the sibyl; "the widow of a fair-haired man who wore a sword and perished by the axe. She has two children, whom you will adopt for your own. In examining her face you will recognize her by two things: one is that she has a noticeable mark on one of her eyebrows, and the second that in talking she frequently raises her right

hand, being accustomed to holding a handkerchief, which she carries to her mouth whenever she laughs."

"Very well," he returned, "now let us come back to my horoscope."

"See at the base of the finger of Saturn these two signs, one of which resembles a gridiron without a handle, and the other the six of diamonds.

"They predict that your second wife will destroy your happiness, and that she, unlike your first wife, will be fair and born of a race of kings.

"The figure representing the image of the sun at the end of the third joint of the ring finger, which is the finger of Apollo, proves that you will become an extraordinary personage, rising by your own merit, but especially favored by Jupiter and Mars.

"These four straight lines, placed like a palisade below this image of the sun, betoken that you will struggle in vain against a power which, unaided, will stop you in your career.

"Beneath these four straight lines we find again that serpentine line, in the form of the letter S, which has already twice predicted misfortune for you on the finger of Saturn; if the star, which is below that line, were above it instead, it would indicate that you would continue in the zenith of your power for seven lustres.

"The fourth finger of the left hand bears the sign of Mercury at the end of the third joint. This means that few men will possess such sagacity, knowledge, finesse, exactness of reasoning power and keenness of mind as you. You will bend several nations to your vast projects; you will undertake expeditions which will occasion great wonderment; you will cross deep rivers, ascend steep mountains, and traverse immense deserts. But this sign of Mercury also denotes that you will have a very abrupt and capricious temper; that this temper will create powerful enemies against you; and that in the spirit of a true cosmopolitan, tormented by lust of conquest, you will not be

contented anywhere, and that sometimes you will even feel that Europe is too confined a sphere for you.

"As for this ladder which is drawn between the first and third joints of the finger of Mercury, it denotes that in the days of your power, you will carry out immense works for the embellishment of your capital as well as the other cities of your kingdom.

"And now we pass to the thumb, which is the finger of Venus.

"As you see, here is her all-powerful sign on the second joint. It announces that you will adopt children which are not your own, and that your first union will be childless, although you have had, and will have again, natural children. But as compensation, here are the three stars which are dominated by it; this is a sign that, in spite of the efforts of the enemy, surrounded by great men who supplement your genius, you will be crowned between your sixth and seventh lustre, and that the Pope himself, to gain your favor for the Church of Rome, will come from Rome to place the crown of Louis XIV. and Saint Louis upon your head and that of your wife.

"Beneath the three stars, do you see the sign of Venus and that of Jupiter? Beside them, and on the same line, do you see those numbers which are so lucky when in conjunction—9, 19, and 99? They are the proof that the East and West will clasp hands, and that the Cæsars of the house of Hapsburg will consent to ally their name with yours.

"Below those numbers we find the same sun which we have already seen on the tip of the finger of Apollo, and which indicates that, contrary to the celestial luminary, which goes from east to west, your course will be from west to east.

"Now let us go up from the first joint of this thumb to the O which crosses a bar diagonally. Well, that sign indicates disordered vision, political blindness. As for the three stars on the first joint and the sign which surmounts them, they are only a confirmation of the prediction that

women will have a great influence upon your life, and they indicate that even as happiness will come to you through a woman, so will it take flight through a woman.

"As for the four signs scattered about the palm of the hand in the form of an iron rake, one in the field of Mars, another adhering to the line of life, and the remaining two adjoining the base of the mountain of The Moon, they indicate prodigal expenditure of the blood of soldiers, but only upon the battlefield.

"The top of this forked line, divided toward the mount of Jupiter, number 8, denotes extended journeys in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Some of these journeys will be forced ones, as the X at the top of the line of life denotes, overlooking the mount of Venus. Finally, as its branches cross beneath the line of Mars, it is a sure sign of great renown, due to glorious feats of arms. In speaking to you, men will exhaust the whole vocabulary of humility and eulogy; you will be the glorious man, the man of prodigies and miracles. You will be Alexander, you will be Cæsar, you will be even greater than they; you will be Atlas bearing the world. After seeing the whole universe lighted up with your glory, you will see it black as night on the day of your death; and men, seeing that the world is out of joint, will ask, not whether a man has just died, but whether the sun has set."

The young man had listened to this prophecy with an air of gloom rather than joy; he had seemed to follow the sibyl to these heights where she had paused, fatigued, to take breath; then with her he had descended into the abyss, where, as she said, his fortune would be sunk.

He remained silent a moment after she had ceased.

"You have prophesied Cæsar's fortune for me," he said, after a pause.

"It is greater than Cæsar's," she said; "for Cæsar did not attain his end, and you will yours. Cæsar put his foot only upon the first step of the throne, and you will take your seat upon it. But do not forget the dark woman

who has a mark above her right eyebrow, and who carries her handkerchief to her mouth when she smiles."

"And when shall I meet her?" asked the young man.

"You have met her to-day," replied the sibyl, "and she marked with her foot the spot where your long line of victories will begin."

It was so manifestly impossible that the sibyl could have prepared beforehand this series of undoubted truths which had taken place in the past, and the succession of incredible facts which were still buried in the future, that for the first time the young officer believed thoroughly in what she had told him. He put his hand in his pocket and drew forth a purse containing some gold-pieces; but the sibyl laid a detaining hand upon his arm.

"If I have prophesied lies," she said, "the price is too great. If, on the contrary, I have told you the truth we can settle our account only at the Tuileries. At the Tuileries, then, when you are Emperor of the French."

"So be it," replied the young man; "at the Tuileries! And if you have told me the truth, you will lose nothing by waiting."[1]

CHAPTER XXXII

THE MAN OF THE FUTURE

THE 26th of October, at half-past two in the afternoon, the president of the Convention pronounced these words: "The National Convention declares that its mission is fulfilled, and that its sessions are at end." These words were followed by cries of "Long live the Republic!"

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[1] We can vouch for the truth of this scene the more confidently because the details were given us by Mademoiselle Lenormand's friend, pupil, and confidante, Madame Moreau, who lived in the Rue du Tournon, No. 5, in the same house with the celebrated sibyl, and who, devoting herself to the same art, met with great success.

To-day, after the lapse of seventy-two years, and three generations, the man who writes these lines cannot forbear to bow his head in the presence of that memorable date.

The long and stormy career of the Convention ended with an act of clemency. It decreed that the death penalty should be abolished throughout the territory of the French Republic. It changed the name of the Place de la Révolution to the Place de la Concorde. And finally it pronounced an amnesty upon all the deeds relating to the Revolution.

It did not leave a single prisoner in the prisons who had not had a trial, nor one confined for political offences. It was very strong, very sure of itself, this assembly that was resigning its power.

O terrible Convention! stern embalmer, who didst lay the eighteenth century in its blood-stained winding-sheet, thou didst find at thy birth, on the 21st of September, 1792, Europe in arms against France, a dethroned king, a constitution annulled, an administration overthrown, a discredited paper currency, and skeletons of regiments without soldiers!

Thou didst pause a moment, and perceive that, unlike the two assemblies that had preceded thee, it was not for thee to proclaim liberty before a worn-out monarchy, but to defend liberty against all the thrones of Europe!

On the day of thy birth thou didst proclaim the Republic in the face of two opposing armies, one of which was but one hundred and fifty, and the other not more than two hundred miles from Paris. Then, in order to burn thy bridges, thou didst bring to conclusion the king's trial!

When voices rising from thine own bosom cried out, "Humanity!" thou didst reply, "Energy!"

Thou didst make thyself absolute. From the Alps to the coast of Brittany, from the ocean to the Mediterranean, thou didst lay hold of everything and say, "I will answer for everything!"

Like the minister of Louis XII., for whom there were neither friends nor family, but only enemies of France, and

who struck down with the same hand a Chalais and a Marillac, a Montmorency and a Saint-Preuil, thou didst not spare thine own members. And finally, after three years of such convulsions as people had never before experienced, after days which have come down to posterity as the 21st of January, the 31st of October, the 5th of April, the 9th and 13th Thermidor, and the 13th Vendémiaire, bleeding and mutilated, thou didst lay down thy functions, handing over to the Directory safe and flourishing that France which thou didst receive from the Constituent Assembly torn asunder and compromised!

Let those who accuse thee, dare to say what would have happened if thou hadst not followed thy course, if Condé had entered Paris, if Louis XVIII. had ascended the throne, if, instead of the twenty years of Directory, the Consulate, and the Empire, there had been twenty years of restoration, twenty years of Spain instead of France, twenty years of shame instead of twenty years of glory!

Now, was the Directory worthy of the legacy bequeathed to it by its dying mother? That is the question.

The Directory must answer to posterity for its deeds even as the Convention has answered for its own.

The Directory was appointed. The five members were Barras, Rewbell, La Reveillière-Lepaux, Letourneur and Carnot. It was decided that they should take up their official residence at the Luxembourg. They did not know what was the condition of the Luxembourg. They went there to begin their sittings. They found not a single article of furniture.

"The concierge," wrote M. Thiers, "lent them a shaky table, a sheet of letter paper, and a writing-desk, with which to write their first message announcing to the two councils that the Directory was established."

They sent to the Treasury. There was not a penny there.

Barras was their chief; Carnot directed the movements of the armies; Rewbell had charge of the foreign affairs; Letourneur and La Reveillière-Lepaux of the interior ad-

ministration. Buonaparte had command of the Army of Paris. A fortnight later he signed his name Bonaparte.

On the 9th of the following March, about eleven o'clock in the morning, two carriages stopped before the door of the mayoralty of the second district of Paris.

A young man about twenty-six, wearing the uniform of a general officer, descended from the first. He was followed by two witnesses.

A young woman about twenty-eight or thirty descended from the other. She was followed by her two witnesses.

The six presented themselves before citizen Charles-Théodore François, civil magistrate of the second district, who asked them the questions usually propounded to matrimonial aspirants, to which they made the customary replies. Then he ordered the following document read to them, which they afterward signed:

"The 19th Ventôse, in the Year IV. of the Republic.

"Contract of marriage between Napolione Bonaparte, general-in-chief of the army of the interior, aged *twenty-eight* years, born at Ajaccio, in the department of Corsica, residing in Paris, Rue d'Antin, son of Charles Bonaparte, gentleman, and Lætitia Ramolini:

"And Marie-Rose-Josephine Tascher, aged twenty-eight years, born in the island of Martinique, in the Windward Islands, residing in Paris, Rue Chantereine, daughter of Gaspard-Joseph de Tascher, captain of dragoons, and his wife Rose-Claire Desvergers de Sanois.

"I, Charles-Théodore François, civil magistrate of the second district of the canton of Paris, after having in the presence of these parties and their witnesses, read;

"1st. The certificate of birth of Napolione Bonaparte, which states that he was born on the *5th of February,* 1768, of the lawful marriage of Charles Bonaparte and Lætitia Ramolini;

"2d. The certificate of birth of Marie-Rose-Josephine Tascher, which states that she was born on the 23d of June, of the lawful marriage of Joseph-Gaspard de Tascher and of Rose-Claire Desvergers de Sanois;

"The certificate of death of Alexandre-François-Marie

de Beauharnais, being taken into consideration, which states that he died on the 7th Thermidor, in the year II., married to Marie-Rose-Josephine de Tascher;

"Also that the certificate of publication of said marriage was duly posted without opposition during the time prescribed by law;

"And also that Napolione Bonaparte and Marie-Rose-Josephine Tascher had declared aloud that they took each other for husband and wife—I did pronounce Napolione Bonaparte and Marie-Rose-Josephine Tascher to be husband and wife.

"And this in the presence of the adult witnesses hereafter named, to wit: Paul Barras, member of the executive Directory, living at the Luxembourg; Captain Jean Lemarrois, aide-de-camp, living in the Rue des Capucines; Jean-Lambert Tallien, member of the Corps-Legislatif, living at Chaillot, and Etienne-Jacques-Jerôme Calmelets, lawyer, living in the Rue de la Place Vendôme, No. 207, all of whom have signed with the principals, as I have done, after this reading."

Indeed, one may see the six signatures of M.-R.-J. Tascher, of Napolione Bonaparte, of Tallien, of Barras, of J. Lemarrois, Jr., of E. Calmelets, and of C.-T. François, at the foot of the certificate we have just quoted.

The remarkable thing about this certificate, however, is that it contains two false statements. Bonaparte was there alleged to be two and a half years older than he really was, and Josephine two years younger than she was. She was born on the 23d of June, 1763, and Bonaparte on the 15th of August, 1769.

On the day after their marriage Bonaparte was appointed commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy. This was Barras's wedding gift.

On the 26th of March, Bonaparte arrived at Nice with two thousand louis in the box of his carriage, and a million in drafts.

Jourdan and Moreau had been given a magnificent army of seventy thousand men. But the Directory only dared trust Bonaparte with thirty thousand men, who were fam-

ished, in want of everything, reduced to the last extremity, without clothes, shoes or pay, and most of the time without provisions, but who nevertheless bore all their privations, even hunger, with admirable fortitude.

His officers were Masséna, a young Niçard, headstrong and obstinate, but full of happy inspirations; Augereau, whom we have already met at Strasbourg, where we saw him handle the foil against Eugene, and the musket against the Austrians; La Harpe, a banished Swiss; Serrurier, a soldier of the old school, painstaking and brave; and finally Berthier, the chief of his staff, whose good qualities he had already divined — qualities which improved every day.

With his thirty thousand soldiers he had to fight sixty thousand, twenty thousand Piedmontese under General Collé, and forty thousand Austrians under General Beaulieu. These generals looked with disdain at the young general, their junior in years, who it was said owed his position to Barras's patronage—small, thin and proud, with an Arab complexion, piercing eyes and Roman features.

As for the soldiers, they responded to the first words that he spoke to them; it was the kind of talk they needed. He said:

"Soldiers, you are poorly fed, and almost naked; the government owes you much, but it can do nothing for you now. Your courage and patience are worthy of all honor; but if you remain here they will procure neither profit nor glory. I am about to lead you to the most fertile plains in the world. You will find great cities and beautiful provinces there; you will find riches, honor, and glory. Follow me!"

That same day he distributed four gold louis to the generals, who had not seen gold for years, and removed his headquarters to Albenga. He was eager to reach Voltri, which was the place that Josephine had marked with her foot the first time that she had called upon him.

He reached Arenza the 11th of April.

Would he meet the enemy? Would he obtain this pledge of his future fortune?

As he ascended the slope of Arenza, at the head of the division La Harpe, which formed the advance guard, he uttered a cry of joy; he had just seen a column leaving Voltri. It was Beaulieu and the Austrians.

They fought for five days, at the end of which time Bonaparte was master of the Valley of the Bormida. The Austrians, defeated at Montenotte and Dego, retreated toward Acqui, and the Piedmontese, after losing the passes of Millesiome, fell back upon Ceva and Mondovi.

Master of all the roads, with nine thousand prisoners in his train, who were to be sent to France to herald his first victory, from the heights of Monte Remonto he pointed out to his soldiers the beautiful plains of Italy, which he had promised them. He showed them all the rivers which empty into the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, and pointing to a gigantic mountain covered with snow, he exclaimed: "Hannibal crossed the Alps; we have turned them."

Thus we see that Hannibal naturally presented himself to his mind as a medium of comparison. Later it was Cæsar. Later still it was Charlemagne.

We have witnessed the birth of his fortune. Let us leave the conqueror at the first station in his journey across the world. He is fairly started on the road to Milan, Cairo, Vienna Berlin, Madrid, and, alas! to Moscow.

THE EIGHTEENTH FRUCTIDOR

CHAPTER I

A GLANCE AT THE PROVINCES

ON THE evening of the 28th of May, 1797, at the moment when, his glorious campaign in Italy finished, Bonaparte was enthroned with Josephine at Montebello, surrounded by ministers from foreign courts; when the Corinthian horses, having descended from the Duomo, and the Lion of Saint Mark, having fallen from its column, were on their way to Paris; when Pichegru, relieved from service on account of vague suspicions, had just been made president of the Five Hundred, and Barbé-Marbois president of the Ancients—a horseman, who was travelling, as Virgil says, "under the friendly silence of the moon" ("Per amica silentia lunæ"), and who was trotting upon a powerful horse along the road from Mâcon to Bourg, left that road a little above the village of Polias. He jumped, or rather made his horse jump, the ditch which separated the road from the plowed fields, and followed the banks of the river Veyle for about five hundred yards, where he was not liable to meet either villager or traveller. There, doubtless no longer fearing to be recognized or noticed, he allowed his coat to slip from his shoulders to the saddle, thereby discovering a belt in which he carried two pistols and a hunting-knife. Then he lifted his hat and wiped his perspiring forehead. The traveller was a young man of twenty-eight or nine years of age, handsome, distinguished, and well-built; and it was evident that he was prepared to repel force by force if any one should have the temerity to attack him.

And, by the way, the precaution which had caused him to put a pair of pistols in his belt was by no means an unwarranted one. The Thermidorean reaction, suppressed in Paris on the 13th Vendémiaire, had taken refuge in the provinces, where it had assumed gigantic proportions. Lyons was become its headquarters; on one side, by way of Nimes, it stretched out its hand to Marseilles, and on the other, by way of Bourg in Bresse, as far as Besançon. For further information regarding this reaction we might refer our reader to our romance "The Companions of Jehu," or to Charles Nodier's "Souvenirs de la Revolution et de l'Empire"; but as the reader will probably not have either of these two works at hand, we will briefly reproduce here what is necessary for our purpose.

It was not to be wondered at that the Thermidorean reaction, suppressed in the first capital of France, had taken up its abode in the second, with branches at Marseilles and Besançon. What Lyons suffered after the revolt is well known. The guillotine was too slow, and Collot d'Herbois and Fouché supplemented it with grape and canister. There were few families at that time, belonging either to the rich commercial classes or the nobility, who had not lost one or more of its members. The time had now come to avenge the lost father, brother or son; and they were avenged openly, publicly, in broad daylight. "You caused the death of my father, my son, or my brother," they would say to the informer, and then they would immediately strike him down.

"Speculation in regard to murder," says Nodier, "was largely indulged in among the upper classes. There, secrets of murder were recounted in the salons which would have terrified the galleys. Men played *Charlemagne* with death for the stakes, without even taking the trouble to lower their voices when they discussed their plans of killing. The women, sweet alleviators of all the passions of men, took part in these dreadful discussions of death. Since horrible hags no longer wore guillotines for ear-rings,

'adorable furies,' as Corneille would have said, wore daggers for breast-pins. If you objected on sentimental grounds to these frightful excesses, they would take you to the Brotteaux and make you tread, in spite of yourself, upon the elastic springy soil, saying: 'Our relatives are there.' What a picture do these exceptional times present, whose nameless, indefinable character cannot be expressed by the facts themselves, so inadequate are words to reproduce the unheard of confusion of ideas, so antipathetic in themselves, the union of the most refined methods with implacable fury, the horrifying compact between the doctrines of humanity and deeds worthy of cannibalism. How can we convey an adequate impression of this impossible time when prison-cells did not protect the prisoners, when the executioner, who came in search of his victim, found, to his astonishment, that he had been preceded by the assassin — this never-ending 2d of September, renewed every day by respectable young men who had just left a salon, and who were expected in a boudoir?

"It was, it must be admitted, a localized monomania —a craving for rage and murder which had sprung into life under the wings of revolutionary harpies; an appetite for larceny, sharpened by confiscations; a thirst for blood, inflamed by the sight of blood. It was the frenzy of a generation nourished, like Achilles, upon the marrow of wild animals; a generation which had no model or ideal other than Schiller's brigands and the freebooters of the Middle Ages. It was the sharp irresistible desire to renew society by the means which had destroyed it—crime. It was the inevitable result of the immutable tendency of compensation in remarkable times; the Titans after Chaos; Python after the deluge; a flock of vultures after the battle; the unerring law of retaliation for those unaccountable scourges which demand death for death, corpse for corpse, which pays itself with usury, and which Holy Writ counts among the treasures of Providence.

"The unexpected amalgamation of these bands, whose

object was at first unknown, exhibited at first in a slight degree the inevitable confusion of ranks, conditions, and persons which is noticeable in all factions and parties which are the outgrowth of a disorganized society; but there was less in this case than had ever been seen before. That portion of the lower classes which participated in the movement did not lack the varnish of manner which is the result of expensive vices; an aristocratic populace which ran from one debauch to another, and from one excess to another, in the wake of the nobility of name and fortune, as if to prove that there is nothing more facile of emulation than a bad example. The remainder concealed beneath a most refined exterior a more odious depravity, because it had to break down the barriers of conventionality and education. Never before had so many assassins in silk stockings been seen; and it would have been a great mistake to imagine that luxurious habits existed in an inverse ratio to ferocity of character. Pitiless examples of mad fury were no less common among men of the world than among men of the people, and death was found to possess no less cruel refinements when inflicted by the dagger of the dandy than when inflicted by the knife of the butcher.

"The proscribed had at first eagerly sought the shelter of the prisons as a refuge. When this melancholy bulwark was destroyed, like everything else that men had formerly held sacred—like the churches and the tombs—the administration endeavored to provide for the safety of the victims by sending them out of the provinces. To protect them from private vengeance, the authorities sent them sixty or eighty miles away from their wives and children, among men who knew neither their names nor their station. The fatal move only resulted in changing the place of sepulchre. These parties in death exchanges delivered their prey from one department to another with the regularity of commercial transactions. Never had business-like habits been thus degraded to horrible traffic. Nor were these barbarous drafts, payable in men's heads, protested when they came due.

As soon as the letter of advice arrived they would coolly balance debits and credits, and carry forward the balances, and the check drawn in blood would be honored at sight.

"This spectacle, the very idea of which is revolting to the soul, was often renewed. Picture to yourself one of those long carts with racks in which animals are taken to the shambles, and hurdled upon them in confusion, men, their hands and feet securely tied with cords, their heads hanging down, swaying with each jolt of the cart, panting for breath, in despair and terror, for crimes of which the greatest was an excited outburst which had spent itself in threatening words. Do not imagine for a second that the feast of the martyrs or the expiatory honors of the sacrifice were prepared for them on their return, or that they were even allowed the empty satisfaction of offering for a moment an impossible resistance to an attack without peril, as in the arenas of Constantius and Gallus. The assassins surprised them as they lay; and they were murdered in their bonds, and the club, reddened with blood, continued to play upon their bodies long after they had ceased to feel."

Nodier once saw and described to me a septuagenarian noted for his gentleness of manner and that scrupulous courtesy which is esteemed above all else in provincial salons; one of those men of breeding who are becoming almost extinct, and who used to make one visit to Paris to pay their court to the minister, and to be present at the king's card-party and hunting-party, and who owed to this happy memory the privilege of dining from time to time with the *intendant*, and of giving their opinion on important occasions upon questions of etiquette. Nodier saw him—while women looked on calmly holding their children in their arms, and while the latter clapped their little hands—Nodier saw him, and I quote his very words, "wearying his withered old arm striking a corpse with his gold-headed cane, in which the assassins had neglected to extinguish

the last spark of life, and which had just betrayed its agony by a final convulsion."

And now that we have tried to give some idea of the state of the country through which the traveller was passing, no wonder will be felt at the precautions which he had deemed advisable to take, nor at the attention he paid to every turn of the country, with which he seemed wholly unfamiliar. In fact, he had not followed the banks of the Veyle for more than a mile and a half before he reined in his horse, stood up in his stirrups, and, leaning over his saddle, tried to pierce the darkness, which had deepened since a cloud had passed over the face of the moon. He began to despair of finding his way without being forced to secure the services of a guide, either at Montech or at Saint-Denis, when a voice, coming apparently from the depths of the river, startled him, so unexpected was it. It said in the most cordial tone: "Can I assist you in any way, citizen?"

"Faith, yes," replied the traveller; "and as I cannot come to you, not knowing where you are, perhaps you will be so good as to come to me, since you apparently do know where I am."

And thus speaking he covered his pistols, and the hand which was playing with them, with his cloak.

CHAPTER II

THE TRAVELLER

THE traveller had not been mistaken; the voice did come from the river. A shadow slowly ascended the bank, and in a moment stood at the horse's head, with one hand resting on the bridle. The rider, apparently annoyed by this familiarity, pulled his horse back a step or two.

"Oh! I beg your pardon, citizen," said the new-comer, "I did not know it was forbidden to touch your horse."

"It is not forbidden," said the traveller; "but you know at night, and in these times, it is advisable to converse at a certain distance."

"The deuce! I cannot distinguish what is advisable from what is not. You seemed unable to find your way; I saw it, and I said to myself, as I am a good fellow, 'Here is a Christian who does not seem to know his way about, so I will direct him.' You called to me to come to you, and here I am. You do not need me; good-by!"

"Your pardon, friend," said the other, restraining him with a gesture, "the movement of my horse was an involuntary one. I do really need you, and you can do me a service."

"What is it? Tell me. Oh! I bear no malice."

"Do you belong to this region?"

"I come from Saint-Rémy, near by. You can see the church from here."

"Then you know the neighborhood?"

"I should think so. I am a fisherman by trade. There is not a run of water for thirty miles around into which I have not cast my lines."

"Then you must know the abbey of Seillon?"

"Do I know the abbey of Seillon! I should think so. But I can't say as much for the monks."

"And why can't you say as much for the monks?"

"Why, because they have been driven out since 1797, of course."

"Then to whom does the Chartreuse belong?"

"To no one."

"What? A farm, a convent, a forest of ten thousand acres, and three thousand acres of land besides, here in France, which belongs to no one?"

"They belong to the Republic, which amounts to the same thing."

"Then the Republic does not cultivate the land which it confiscates?"

"As if it had the time! It has plenty of other things to do, has this Republic."

"What has it to do?"

"It has to make a new skin."

"True—it is putting on its third. Do you bother your head with such things?"

"Oh! a little in my spare time. Our neighbors of the Jura have sent the Republic General Pichegru, just the same."

"Yes."

"They can't have liked that very well over yonder. But here I am chattering and wasting your time. After all, though, if you are going to Seillon, you need not hurry."

"Why not?"

"Why, because there is no one there."

"No one?"

"The deuce, not unless it be the ghosts of the old monks, and they don't appear until midnight, so you will have to wait."

"Are you sure, my friend," persisted the traveller, "that there is *no one* at the abbey of Seillon?" And he emphasized the words.

"I passed there yesterday, when I was carrying some fish to Madame de Montrevel at the Château des Noires-Fontaines; there was not even a cat there." Then he added emphatically: "They were all priests of Baal, so there is not much harm done."

The traveller started, more visibly than at first.

"*Priests of Baal?*" he asked, looking fixedly at the fisherman.

"Yes, and unless you come from a certain king of Israel whose name I have forgotten—"

"From King Jehu, you mean, do you not?"

"I am not sure; it was a king who was consecrated by a prophet—named—named— What was the name of the prophet who consecrated King Jehu?"

"Elisha," responded the traveller, without hesitation.

"That is it. But he consecrated him on one condition. What was that condition? Help me to remember."

"That he punish the crimes of the house of Ahab and Jezebel."

"The deuce! Tell me about it at once;" and he held out his hand to the traveller.

The traveller and the fisherman gave each other a final sign of recognition, which left neither of them in doubt that they both belonged to the same association. However, they did not question each other as to their personal affairs, nor as to the work which they both had in hand, the one in going to the abbey of Seillon, the other in setting his lines and tents. But the young fisherman said:

"I am sorry that I am kept here by superior orders; if it were not for that I would gladly serve as your guide; but I cannot return to the Chartreuse until they have given me the signal. But there is no longer any need to deceive you. You see those two black masses of which one is higher than the other? The higher one is the town of Bourg; the lower the village of Saint-Denis. Pass between the two at an equal distance, and continue on your way until you are stopped by the bed of the Reissouse. You can cross it, for the water will scarcely reach to your horse's knees; then you will see a great black curtain before you. That is the forest."

"Thanks," said the traveller; "once in the forest, I know what to do."

"Even if they do not reply to your signal from the forest?"

"Yes."

"Well, go then, and good luck to you."

The two young men shook hands once again, and the young fisherman descended the bank with the same rapidity with which he had ascended it.

The traveller mechanically stretched out his neck to see what had become of him. He was invisible. Then the traveller gathered up his reins, and as the moon had come out and he had an open field to cross, he put his horse to a gallop, and was soon between Bourg and Saint-Denis.

The clock struck in both places at the same time. The traveller counted eleven strokes.

After crossing the road from Lyons to Bourg, the traveller found himself, as the fisherman had said, on the banks of a little river. His horse reached the other side with two strides, and when there he saw before him a plain about two hundred yards wide, bounded by a dark line, which he had been told was the forest. He spurred his horse straight for it.

Ten minutes later he was riding along a country road which skirted the forest in its whole length. There he stopped a moment and looked around him. He did not hesitate to give the signal agreed upon, but he wished to make sure that he was alone. The silence of the night is at times so intense that the most daring men respect it, unless they are forced to break it. For a moment then, as we have said, our traveller looked and listened, but he neither saw nor heard anything. He put his hand to his mouth and whistled thrice with the handle of his whip, the first and last being strong and resonant, the second tremulous, like a boatswain's whistle. The sound was lost in the depths of the forest, but no sound, either similar or dissimilar, replied to it. While he listened, midnight struck at Bourg, and was repeated by all the clocks of the neighborhood. The traveller repeated the signal a second time, and again silence was his only answer.

Then he seemed to make up his mind, and following the country road until he came to one at right angle with it, he resolutely plunged into the latter; ten minutes later he came to another, which crossed it again, and following this cross-road, he bore to the left, and five minutes later was out of the forest.

A dark mass rose before him some two hundred yards away, which was doubtless the goal of his journey. As he approached it he studied certain details to make sure that this was really the old Chartreuse before him.

At last he stopped before a great portal surmounted by

three statues, those of the Virgin, of Our Lord, and of Saint John the Baptist. The statue of the Virgin, placed directly over the door, formed the apex of the triangle. The two others came down to the cross-piece, forming the branch of the stone cross, in which a double door of massive oak was set, which, more fortunate than certain other portions of the frontal, and more particularly the windows on the first floor, seemed to have survived the ravages of time.

"Here it is," said the traveller; "and now to see which of the three statues is that of Saint John."

CHAPTER III

THE CHARTREUSE OF SEILLON

THE traveller found the statue he sought standing in the niche at the right of the great door. He brought his horse close to the wall, and standing up in his stirrups, he reached the base of the pedestal of the statue; he slipped his hand into it, felt a ring, drew it to him, and guessed at rather than heard the tinkling of a little bell. This he repeated three times. After the third time he listened. He thought he heard a hesitating step approach the door.

"Who rang?" asked a voice.

"He who comes in the name of the prophet," replied the traveller.

"What prophet?"

"He who has left his mantle to his disciples."

"What is his name?"

"Elisha."

"Who is the king of Israel whom the children of Israel must obey?"

"Jehu."

"What is the house they are to exterminate?"

"That of Ahab."

"Are you a prophet or a disciple?"

"I am a disciple, but I have come to be made a prophet."

"Then welcome to the House of the Lord."

Scarcely had these words been uttered than the iron bars which held the door were noiselessly removed, the bolts shot as noiselessly back into their sockets, and the door opened silently, as if by magic.

The rider and his horse disappeared beneath the arch. The door closed behind them. The man who had opened it so slowly and closed it so quickly approached the newcomer as he dismounted.

The latter looked curiously at him. He was dressed in the long white robes of the Carthusian monks, and his hood entirely concealed his head. He took the horse's bridle, but evidently more as a favor than as a duty. In the meantime the traveller unfastened his valise from the saddle, and drawing his pistols from their holsters, put them in his belt with the others.

The traveller glanced around him, and seeing no light and hearing no sound, he asked: "Are the Companions absent?"

"They have gone on an expedition," replied the brother.

"Do you expect them back to-night?"

"I hope for them to-night, but I scarcely expect them before to-morrow night."

The traveller reflected for a moment. Their absence seemed to disturb him.

"I cannot lodge in the town," said he; "I should be afraid of being noticed, if not recognized. Can I wait here for the Companions?"

"Yes, if you will give me your word of honor not to attempt to go away."

"You have it."

In the meantime the robe of a second monk appeared in the shadow, growing whiter as he approached the spot where they were standing. He was doubtless a Companion of a lower order, for the first one tossed the horse's bridle to him, telling him to take the horse to the stable, more in the way

of command than of request. Then, holding out his hand to the traveller, he said: "You understand why we have no lights. This monastery is supposed to be uninhabited, or at least inhabited by ghosts only; a light would betray us. Take my hand and follow me."

The traveller removed his glove and took the monk's hand. It was a soft hand, evidently unused to all labors which deprive this member of its pristine, aristocratic appearance. In the circumstances in which the traveller found himself everything was of importance. He perceived at once that he had to do with a man of innate good breeding, and followed him without hesitation. After several turns in corridors that were perfectly dark, they entered a rotunda which was lighted from above. This was evidently the dining-room of the Companions. It was lighted by candles placed in candelabra on the walls. A fire was burning in a large fireplace, fed by dry wood, which made little or no smoke.

The monk handed the traveller a chair, and said: "If our brother is weary, let him rest; if our brother is hungry, supper will be served him; if he wishes to sleep, he will be shown to his bed."

"I accept them all," said the traveller, stretching out his shapely and powerful limbs. "The chair because I am weary, the supper because I am hungry, the bed because I am sleepy. But with your permission, my very dear brother, we will take them in turn."

He threw his broad-brimmed hat upon the table, and passing his hand through his wavy hair, he revealed a high forehead, beautiful eyes, and a serene expression. The monk who had led the horse to the stable now entered, and in answer to his companion's questions said that he had given it fresh straw and that its manger was full of hay. Then, in obedience to an order, he laid a napkin at the end of the table and placed upon it a bottle of wine, a glass, a cold chicken, a pie, a plate, a knife, and a fork.

"Whenever you like, my brother," said the monk, pointing to the laden table.

"At once," said the traveller. And without rising from his chair he drew up to the table.

He bravely attacked the chicken, of which he took first the leg and then the wing upon his plate. Then came the pie, of which he ate a slice, while he sipped his wine. The monk, in the meantime, stood quietly a few steps behind him. The monk was not inquisitive and the traveller was hungry, so neither of them uttered a word. When the meal was finished, the traveller drew his watch from his pocket.

"Two o'clock," he said; "still two hours before daylight." Then, addressing the monk, he asked: "If our Companions do not come to-night we need not expect them before to-morrow night, I suppose?"

"Probably not," replied the monk; "save in cases of absolute necessity our Companions never travel by day."

"Well," said the traveller, "I will wait one of these two hours; if they have not returned by three o'clock you may show me to my room. In the meantime, if you have anything to do, do not disturb yourself about me. You belong to a silent order and I never chatter except with women. You have none here, have you?"

"No," replied the monk.

"Well, then, go about your business if you have any, and leave me to my thoughts."

The monk bowed and withdrew, but before he went he placed a second bottle of wine upon the table. The guest acknowledged the attention with a bow, and mechanically continued to sip his wine and nibble his crust of pie.

"If this is the ordinary fare of our Carthusians," he thought, "I do not pity them. Pomard for every-day wine, a chicken (to be sure we are in the country of chickens), and snipe pie! However, there is no dessert."

The thought had hardly shaped itself in his mind when the monk, who had already served both horse and rider, entered, bearing on a dish a fine slice of Sassenage cheese

dotted with green, the invention of which, it is said, dates from the fairy Melusine. Without being a gourmand, the traveller, as we have seen, seemed quite able to appreciate a good supper. He did not say with Brillat-Savarin, "A good meal without cheese is like a woman without an eye," but doubtless he thought so.

An hour passed while he finished his wine and picked up the crumbs of the cheese with the point of his knife. The monk had left him alone, and he was consequently able to devote himself to this double occupation. He drew out his watch. It was three o'clock.

He looked for a bell but found none. He was on the point of striking his glass with his knife, when it occurred to him that this would be taking a great liberty with the good monks who had treated him so hospitably.

Therefore, wishing to keep the promise he had made himself of going to bed, he laid his weapons on the table, that he might not be suspected of breaking his word, and bareheaded, with only his hunting knife at his side, he passed out into the corridor by which he had entered. Half-way down he met the monk who had received him.

"Brother," said the monk, "we have seen two signals announcing that the Companions are approaching; they will be here in five minutes. I was just on my way to tell you."

"Well," said the traveller, "let us go to meet them."

The monk made no objection. He turned back and entered the courtyard followed by the stranger. The second monk opened the double door as he had done for the traveller. The door once open, the gallop of several horses was plainly discernible.

"Make room," said the monk to the traveller, drawing him aside against the wall.

At the same moment a whirlwind of men and horses swept under the arch with a noise like that of thunder.

The traveller thought for a moment that the Companions were pursued, but he was mistaken.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRAITOR

THE door closed behind them. Daylight had not yet come, but the darkness was less profound. The traveller was surprised to see that the Companions had a prisoner with them. His hands were tied behind his back, and he was fastened to a horse which two of the Companions were leading. These three had entered first and had galloped to the end of the courtyard. Two by two the others had followed and had surrounded them. All had then dismounted. The prisoner had remained on horseback for a moment; then they had taken him down.

"Let me speak to Captain Morgan," said the traveller to the monk who had attended him. "He must know at once that I am here."

The monk went and whispered a few words in the leader's ears, who hastened to the traveller's side.

"From whom do you come?" he asked.

"Shall I use the ordinary formula," asked the traveller, "or shall I simply tell you from whom I really come?"

"Since you are here, you have probably satisfied all requirements. Tell me who sent you."

"General Roundhead."

"You have a letter from him?"

"Here it is." And the traveller put his hand to his pocket, but Morgan stopped him.

"Later," said he. "First we must try a traitor. Take the prisoner to the council-chamber," he added.

Just then they caught the gallop of a second troop of horsemen. Morgan listened attentively.

"Those are our brothers," said he; "open the door."

The door was opened.

"Draw back!" cried Morgan.

And a second company of four men entered almost as rapidly as the first.

"Have you the prisoner?" cried their leader.

"Yes," replied the Companions of Jehu with one accord.

"And you," asked Morgan, "have you the report?"

"Yes," replied the four with one voice.

"Then all is well," replied Morgan, "and justice will be done."

This is what had happened:

As we have said, several bands, known by the name of Companions of Jehu, or Avengers, and sometimes by both, scoured the country from Marseilles to Besançon. One had its headquarters in the neighborhood of Avignon, a second in the Jura, and a third, as we have seen, in the old Chartreuse of Seillon.

As all these young men belonged to families residing in the neighborhood, as soon as each undertaking was accomplished, whether or not successfully, they returned to their respective homes. A quarter of an hour later our pillager of diligences, with his hat perched over his ear, his eyeglass in his eye, and his stick in his hand, was walking through the town asking what had happened, and marvelling at the incredible insolence of these fellows to whom nothing was sacred, not even the cash of the Directory. Now, how could young men, some of whom were rich, and all of whom were connected with the ruling powers of the neighborhood, be suspected of highway robbery? Nor were they suspected—though, had they been, no one would have taken it upon himself to denounce them.

However, the government was much annoyed to see its money turned from its original destination—the coffers of the Directory at Paris—into those of the Chouans in Brittany. They therefore decided to play a trick upon their enemies.

In one of the diligences used to convey money, they placed seven or eight gendarmes dressed as citizens, who had sent their pistols and carbines beforehand to the dili-

gence, and who had received express orders to take one of the outlaws alive. The thing had been planned so cleverly that the Companions of Jehu had heard nothing about it. The vehicle, with the modest appearance of an ordinary diligence—that is to say, filled with honest bourgeois—ventured into the pass of Cavaillon, and was stopped by eight masked men. A sharp discharge of firearms from within the coach disclosed the trick to the Companions, who, not desirous of entering into a profitless struggle, set off at a gallop, and, thanks to the excellence of their horses, soon disappeared. But one horse had his leg broken by a ball, and fell on his rider. The horseman, held down by the animal, could not escape, and the gendarmes thus fulfilled the double duty of defending the government money, and of capturing one of those who sought to lay hands on it.

Like the old free-booters, like the Illuminati of the eighteenth century, like the Freemasons of modern times, the members of this society, in order to become affiliated with it, underwent brutal tests, and took blood-curdling oaths. One of these oaths was never to betray a Companion, no matter what torture might be inflicted. If the name of a Companion escaped him, or if, weakness overcoming him, any facts escaped his lips, then the Companions, taking the place of that justice which granted mercy or softened the penalty as a reward for his treachery, had ordained that the first of their number who should meet him was justified in burying his dagger in the traitor's heart!

Now the prisoner taken on the road from Marseilles, whose assumed name was Hector and whose real name was Fargas, after having resisted promises as well as threats for a long time, finally weary of prison life, and tortured with loss of sleep—the worst of all tortures—and being known by his real name, had ended by confessing and naming his accomplices.

But as soon as this became known, the judges were overwhelmed by such a deluge of threatening letters and re-

marks that they resolved to conduct the trial at the other end of France, and had chosen for that purpose the little town of Nantua, at the furthest extremity of the Department of the Ain.

But at the same time that the prisoner was removed to Nantua, with every precaution taken for his safety, the Companions of Jehu at the Chartreuse of Seillon received word of the betrayal and the removal of the traitor.

"It is for you, the most devoted of our brothers," they were told—"it is for Morgan, the most venturesome and daring of us all, to save the Companions by destroying the report which accuses them, and likewise to make a terrible example of the person of the traitor. Let him be tried, condemned and executed, and exposed to the gaze of all with the avenging poniard in his breast."

This was the terrible mission which Morgan had just accomplished. He had gone with ten of his comrades to Nantua. Six of them, after having gagged the sentinel, had knocked at the prison door and forced the keeper at the pistol's point to open the gate. Once inside, they had learned which was Fargas's cell, and, accompanied by the keeper and the jailer, they had gone to it, locked in the two officials, bound the young man on a horse, which they had brought with them, and had set off at a gallop.

The other four, in the meantime, had seized the clerk, had forced him, at the dead of night, to admit them to the registry, of which he had the key, as he sometimes worked there all night, when there was great stress of business. There they had compelled him to surrender all the court records, together with the interrogatories, which contained the charges signed with the prisoner's name. Then, to save the clerk, who begged them not to ruin him, and who had perhaps not made all possible resistance, they emptied a number of boxes, set fire to them, shut the door, returned the key to the clerk, who was then free to return home, and set off at a gallop themselves with the papers in their possession.

It is needless to say that all who had taken part in this expedition had worn masks.

This is why the second troop, when they entered the courtyard of the Chartreuse, had asked: "Have you the prisoner?" and why the first troop, after replying in the affirmative, had asked: "Have you the report?" And this is also the reason why Morgan had remarked subsequently: "Then all is well, and justice will be done!"

CHAPTER V

THE JUDGMENT

THE prisoner was a young man of twenty-two or three years of age, who resembled a woman rather than a man, so slender and fair was he. He was bareheaded and in his shirt sleeves, with pantaloons and boots. The Companion had seized him in his cell just as he was and had hurried him away without allowing him an instant's reflection.

His first thought had been that he was rescued. These men who had entered his cell were beyond question Companions of Jehu; that is to say, they were men who held the same opinions and belonged to the same band as himself. But when he found that they had bound his hands, and when he saw their eyes flashing angrily through their masks, he realized that he had fallen into hands far more terrible than those of his judges—the hands of those whom he had betrayed—and that he could hope for nothing from comrades whom he had been willing to denounce.

On the way he had not asked a single question and no one had spoken to him. The first words he heard from the lips of his judges were the ones they had just pronounced. He was very pale, but this pallor was the only sign of emotion he displayed.

At Morgan's command the pretended monks crossed the

cloister. The prisoner walked first between two of them, each holding a pistol in his hand.

The cloister crossed, they passed into the garden. This procession of the twelve marching silently along in the darkness had something terrifying about it. They approached the door of the subterranean vault. One of the two who were walking with the prisoner raised a stone, disclosing a ring beneath it, by means of which he lifted a flagstone which concealed the entrance to a staircase.

The prisoner hesitated a moment, so closely did the entrance of the vault resemble that of a tomb. The two monks who walked beside him descended first; then from a groove in the stone they took two torches which had been placed there for those who might have occasion to enter the vault. They struck a light, kindled the torches, and uttered the one word: "Descend!"

The prisoner obeyed. The monks disappeared to the last man in the vault. They walked on for several moments until they reached a grating; one of the monks drew a key from his pocket and opened the grating. It led into a burial vault.

The whole subterranean chapel stood at the end of the vault, which the Companions of Jehu used for their council-chamber. A table covered with black cloth stood in the centre, and twelve carved stalls, which had formerly been used by the monks when the burial service was being chanted, extended along the wall on either side of the chapel. On the table were placed an ink-stand, several pens, and some paper; two iron brackets projected from the wall, like hands ready to receive the torches which were placed in them.

The twelve monks seated themselves in the twelve stalls. They made the prisoner sit upon a stool at the end of the table; on the other side stood the traveller, the only one who did not wear the monk's cowl and who was not masked.

Morgan spoke.

"Monsieur Lucien de Fargas," he said, "was it of your

own free will, and without constraint or force from any one, that you asked our brothers in the Midi to admit you to our association, and that you became an affiliated member thereof, after the usual initiation under the name of Hector?"

The young man bowed assent.

"It was of my own free and unrestrained will, without being forced by any one," he replied.

"You took the customary oaths, and were therefore aware of the terrible punishment awaiting those who prove false to them?"

"I knew," replied the prisoner.

"You knew that when any Companion, even under torture, reveals the names of his brethren, he incurs the death-penalty, and that this penalty is executed without reprieve or delay the moment that proof of his treachery is furnished?"

"I knew it."

"What could have induced you to break your oaths?"

"The impossibility of resisting the torture of loss of sleep. I resisted for five nights, on the sixth I asked for death, which was sleep. They would not give it to me. I sought a means to take my own life; but my jailers had taken their precautions so well that I could find none. On the seventh night I yielded. I promised to make disclosures on the morrow if they would let me sleep; but they insisted that I should speak at once. It was then in despair, insane from want of sleep, held up by the two men who prevented me from sleeping, I stammered the four names of M. de Valensolles, M. de Barjols, M. de Jayat, and M. de Ribier."

One of the monks drew from his pocket the record which they had taken from the registry, and held it before the prisoner's eyes.

"That is it," said the latter.

"And do you recognize your signature?" asked the monk.

"I recognize it," replied the young man.

"Have you any excuse to offer?" asked the monk.

"None," replied the young man. "I knew when I wrote my signature at the bottom of that page that I was signing my death-warrant. But I wanted to sleep."

"Have you any favor to ask before you die?"

"One."

"What is it?"

"I have a sister whom I love and who adores me. Being orphans, we were educated together; we grew up side by side, and have never been parted. I should like to write to my sister."

"You are free to do so. But at the end of your letter you must write the postscript that we shall dictate to you."

"Thanks," said the young man, rising and bowing.

"Will you untie my hands," he added, "so that I may write."

The wish was granted. Morgan, who had been the one to question him, pushed the paper, pen, and ink toward him. The young man wrote a page with a hand that did not tremble.

"I have finished, gentlemen," said he; "will you dictate the postscript?"

Morgan approached and laid one finger on the paper while the prisoner wrote.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the young man.

"I die because I have broken a sacred oath; consequently I acknowledge that I deserve death. If you wish to give my body Christian burial, it will be placed to-night in the market-place at Bourg. The dagger which will be found implanted in my breast will indicate that I do not die the victim of cowardly assassination, but of a just vengeance."

Morgan then drew from beneath his robe a dagger of which both handle and blade were forged from a single piece of metal. It was shaped in the form of a cross so that

the condemned could kiss it in his last moments instead of a crucifix.

"If you wish, sir," said Morgan, "we will accord you the favor of striking your own death-blow. Here is the dagger. Is your hand sure enough?"

The young man pondered an instant. Then he said: "No, I fear that I should fail."

"Very well," said Morgan, "affix the address to your letter."

The young man folded the letter and wrote: "Mademoiselle Diane de Fargas, Nîmes."

"Now, sir," said Morgan, "you have just ten minutes in which to make your peace with God."

The old chapel altar, though mutilated, was still standing. The condemned went to it and knelt down. In the meantime the Companions tore a slip of paper into twelve parts, one of which bore the tracing of a dagger. The twelve pieces were then placed in the hat of the messenger who had arrived just in time to witness this act of vengeance. Then, before the condemned man had finished his prayers, each monk drew a slip in turn. The one to whom the function of executioner had fallen said never a word; he merely took the dagger from the table and tested the point with his finger. The ten minutes having passed, the young man rose.

"I am ready," he said.

Then without hesitation or delay, firm and erect, the monk who had drawn the fatal slip walked straight to him and plunged the dagger into his heart. A cry of agony, then the thud of a body falling upon the pavement, and all was over. The condemned man was dead, the blade of the dagger had pierced his heart.

"Thus perish all the members of our holy order who are false to their oaths," said Morgan.

And all the monks responded in chorus: "Amen!"

CHAPTER VI

DIANE DE FARGAS

JUST as the unfortunate Lucien de Fargas was drawing his last breath in the subterranean chapel of the Chartreuse of Seillon, a post-chaise stopped before the inn of the Dragon at Nantua. This inn of the Dragon had a certain reputation in Nantua and its suburbs, a reputation which it owed to the well-known opinions of its proprietor, René Servet.

Without knowing why, Master René Servet was a royalist. Thanks to the distance which stretched between Nantua and all the great centres of civilization, thanks also to the mild temperament of its inhabitants, Master René Servet had passed through the Revolution without being in the least molested for his opinions, well-known though they were.

It must be confessed, though, that the worthy man had done all in his power to invite persecution. Not only had he retained the name of the Dauphin for his inn, but on the tail of the fantastic fish on his sign-board, a tail which protruded insolently from the water, he had drawn the profile of the poor little prince, who had remained shut up for four years and who had died, shortly after the Thermidorean reaction, in the prison of the Temple.

Therefore all those who for sixty miles round the inn of the Dragon—and their number was great—shared the opinions of René Servet, did not fail to patronize his inn, and would not have consented to go elsewhere.

It was not astonishing, therefore, that a post-chaise having to stop at Nantua should leave its passengers rather at the aristocratic inn of the Dragon than at its democratic rival, the Boule d'Or.

At the sound of the chaise, although it was barely five

in the morning, René Servet leaped out of bed, and putting on his drawers, a pair of white stockings, list slippers, and a great bath-robe over his shoulders, and holding his cotton cap in his hand, reached the doorstep just as a beautiful young woman of twenty or thereabout descended from the chaise.

She was dressed in black, and in spite of her youth and great beauty she was travelling alone.

She replied with a nod to René Servet's obsequious salutation, and, without paying any attention to his offers of service, asked him if he had a good room in his house with a dressing-room. Master René mentioned No. 7 on the first floor as the best he had.

The young lady hastened impatiently to the wooden placard where the keys were hanging from a frame and took down her key herself.

"Sir," said she, "will you be good enough to show me to my room? I want to ask you some questions. You can send the chambermaid to me when you go down."

René Servet bowed almost to the floor and hastened to obey. He went first and the young lady followed. When they reached the room she closed the door behind them, and, as she seated herself, she addressed the landlord, who remained standing.

"Master Servet," she said with decision, "I know you both by name and reputation. Throughout the bloody years that have just elapsed you have remained a partisan, if not a defender of the good cause. Therefore I come directly to you."

"You do me honor, madame," replied the inn-keeper, bowing.

She resumed: "I shall therefore abandon all circumlocution or evasion, to which I might resort with a man whose opinions were less well-known to me, or who was suspected by me. I am a royalist. That gives you a right to my confidence. I know no one here, not even the president of the tribunal, for whom I have a letter from his brother-in-law at

Avignon; it is therefore perfectly natural that I should address myself to you."

"I am waiting, madame," said René Servet, "for you to do me the honor to tell me what it is that I can do for you."

"Have you heard, sir, that a young man named Lucien de Fargas was brought to the prison at Nantua a few days ago?"

"Alas! yes, madame; it seems that he is to be tried here, or rather at Bourg. He is a member, so I am told, of the secret society called the Companions of Jehu."

"Do you know the purpose of that society, sir?" asked the young woman.

"I believe that they are to seize the government money and to forward it to our friends in the Vendée and Brittany."

"Exactly, sir; and the government treats these men like ordinary thieves!"

"I believe, madame," said René Servet, in a voice full of confidence, "that our judges are sufficiently intelligent to differentiate between them and ordinary malefactors."

"But to come to the point. It was thought that my brother ran some risk in the prison at Avignon, and it was to protect him that he was removed to the other end of France. I wish to see him. To whom ought I to apply to obtain this favor?"

"Why, madame, to the very president to whom you have that letter."

"What sort of a man is he?"

"A prudent man, but well-meaning, I hope. I will have you taken to his house whenever you wish."

Mademoiselle de Fargas drew out her watch. It was scarcely half-past five in the morning.

"But I cannot present myself at such an hour," she said. "Shall I go to bed? I am not sleepy." Then, after thinking for a moment, she asked: "On what side of the town is the prison?"

"If madame would like to take a turn that way," re-

plied Master Servet, "I would beg the honor of accompanying her."

"Very well, sir. Send me a glass of milk, coffee, tea, whatever you please, and finish your toilet. While I am waiting for leave to enter, I should like to see the walls behind which my brother is confined."

The innkeeper made no remark; the desire was a natural one. He went down and sent her in a cup of coffee and some milk. Ten minutes later she came down and found him dressed in his Sunday clothes, ready to guide her through the streets of the little town, which was founded by the Benedictine Saint-Amand, and in whose church Charles the Bold sleeps more tranquilly than ever he did in life.

The town of Nantua is not large. A five minutes' walk brought them to the prison, where they found a crowd full of excitement.

Everything arouses foreboding in the minds of those whose friends are in danger. Mademoiselle de Fargas had more than a friend—an adored brother, who was lying in prison, charged with a capital offence. It seemed to her that her brother must be involved in the excitement which had caused the crowd to assemble. Growing pale, she seized the guide's arm, crying: "Oh! my God! what has happened?"

"We shall soon see, mademoiselle," replied René Servet, much less easily moved than his companion.

No one knew positively what had happened. When they had come to relieve the sentinel at two o'clock they had found him gagged and bound hand and foot in his box. All that he could tell was that he had been surprised by four men, and that he had offered a desperate resistance, which had ended in their leaving him in the state in which his comrades had found him. He could give no information concerning what had passed after he had been bound and gagged. He believed, however, that the prisoner had been the object of the attack. The mayor,

the commissioner of police, and the fireman's sergeant had then been notified of what had occurred. These three dignitaries had then held council, had summoned the sentinel before them, and there he had repeated the same story.

After a half hour of deliberation and surmises, each one more ridiculous than its predecessor, they resolved to end where they ought to have begun, by going to the prison. But, in spite of prolonged knocking, no one came to admit them. But the strokes of the knocker aroused the people in the adjacent houses. They came to the windows, and a series of questions and answers passed, which resulted in a locksmith being sent for.

In the meantime the dawn had come, several dogs began to bark, and the occasional passers-by had grouped themselves round the mayor and the police commissioner; and when the sergeant returned with a locksmith, about four o'clock in the morning, he found quite a crowd gathered in front of the prison doors. The locksmith remarked that if the doors were bolted on the inside all the picklocks in the world would be of no avail. But the mayor, a man of great good sense, ordered him to try first, and if he failed they could devise some other means later. Now, as the Companions of Jehu had been unable to close the door on the outside and to bolt it on the inside at one and the same time, they had simply pulled it to after them; and to the great satisfaction of everybody the door had opened at once.

Then everybody tried to rush into the prison; but the mayor placed the sergeant on guard before the door, with orders to keep them all out. They had to obey the law. The crowd increased, but the mayor's order was respected.

There are not many cells in the prison of Nantua; they consist of three subterranean chambers, in one of which they could hear groans. These groans attracted the attention of the mayor, who interrogated those who were making them through the door, and soon found that they were none other than the doorkeeper and the jailer themselves.

They had proceeded thus far with the municipal investigation, when Diane de Fargas and the landlord of the inn of the Dragon arrived in the square before the prison.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT WAS TALKED ABOUT FOR MORE THAN THREE MONTHS IN THE LITTLE TOWN OF NANTUA

TO MASTER RENÉ'S first question, "For heaven's sake! what is going on in the prison, friend Bodoux?" the person thus addressed replied:

"The most extraordinary things that were ever known, Monsieur Servet! When they came to relieve the sentinel this morning, they found him gagged and tied up like a sausage; and just now it seems that they have found Père Rossignol and his turnkey shut up in a cell. What times we live in, good Lord! What times we live in!"

From the very grotesqueness of the reply, Diane saw that he was telling the truth. It was clear to any intelligent person that if the jailer and the turnkey were inside, the prisoner must be outside.

Diane dropped Master René's arm, darted through the crowd, made her way toward the prison, and finally reached the door.

Here she heard some one say: "The prisoner has escaped!"

At the same time, Père Rossignol and the turnkey appeared within the jail, having been released from the cell in the first place by the locksmith, who had opened the door, and in the second place by the mayor and the police commissioner, who had unbound them.

"You cannot pass," said the sergeant to Diane.

"That order may apply to every one else," said Diane, "but not to me. I am the sister of the escaped prisoner."

This reasoning was not very conclusive in point of law,

but it carried with it the logic of the heart, which few men can resist.

"Oh! that is another thing," said the sergeant, lifting his sword. "Pass on, mademoiselle!"

And Diane passed in, to the great astonishment of the crowd, who saw the curtain rising upon a new phase of the drama, and muttered: "It is the prisoner's sister!"

Now everybody in Nantua knew who the prisoner was, and for what cause he was imprisoned.

Père Rossignol and the turnkey were at first in such a state of terror and prostration that neither the mayor nor the police commissioner could get anything out of them. Fortunately the latter bethought him of the idea of giving them each a glass of wine, which enabled the former to relate how six masked men had forced an entrance into the prison, had compelled him and the turnkey Rigobert to go down to the cell with them, and after making sure of the prisoner, who had arrived two days before, had locked them up in his place. Since then they did not know what had happened.

This was all that Diane cared to know for the moment. Convinced that her brother had been taken away by the Companions of Jehu, since Père Rossignol described his assailants as masked men, she hastened from the jail. But she was at once surrounded by an eager crowd, who, having heard that she was the prisoner's sister, wanted to hear the details of his escape.

In a few words Diane told them all she knew, and with great difficulty she rejoined Master René Servet. She was about to give him the order for post-horses to start at once when she heard a man shout that the registry was on fire—a piece of news destined to share the attention of the crowd with that of the prisoner's escape.

Indeed, they had learned almost all that was to be learned, when this unexpected news opened up a new field of conjecture. It was almost certain that there must be some connection between the prisoner's escape and the

fire at the registry. The young girl believed this to be the case. The order to put horses to the chaise died upon her lips, for she felt that this fire would furnish her with further details concerning her brother's escape which might be useful to her.

Time had been speeding on during this investigation. It was now eight o'clock in the morning. This was the time to present herself at the magistrate's house to whom she had the letter. Moreover, the extraordinary events of which the little town of Nantua had been the scene would xplain this early visit, especially from the prisoner's sister. Diane, therefore, begged her landlord to take her to Monsieur Pérignon; for such was the name of the president of the tribunal.

Monsieur Pérignon had been one of the first to be awakened by the news which had thrown all Nantua into a turmoil. But he had hurried to the spot in which he, as a judge, was particularly interested; that is to say, to the registry. He had just returned when Mademoiselle de Fargas was announced.

When he reached the office the fire had been extinguished; but it had already consumed a portion of the papers which had been deposited there for safe-keeping. He had questioned the porter, who told him that the clerk had come to the office about half-past eleven with two gentlemen, and that he, the porter, had not thought it necessary to investigate, inasmuch as the clerk frequently came there in the evening to procure papers which he engrossed at home.

Scarcely had the clerk taken his departure when he had noticed a bright light through the windows of the office. Not understanding what it could mean, he had risen and gone in. There he had found a great fire, lighted in such a way that it would spread along the wooden cases which lined the wall, and which contained boxes of documents. He had not lost his head, but had separated the burning papers from the ones which the fire had as yet left un-

touched, and had succeeded in extinguishing it by bringing water in dippers from a tub in the cellar.

The worthy porter had gone no further in his calculations than to ascribe it to an accident; but as the flames had done some mischief, and he, by his presence of mind, had prevented still greater damage, he had told everybody about it in the morning when he awoke. As it was to his interest to enlarge upon the occurrence, by seven in the morning the rumor was current throughout the town that, had it not been for his great courage, the fire, which had burned his clothes off of his back, would have destroyed not only the registry but also the entire court house.

Monsieur Pérignon, on seeing the state of the registry office, had thought very sensibly that the best way to obtain information was to see the clerk himself. Consequently, he went to his house and asked to see him. He was told that during the night the clerk had been attacked with brain fever, and raved continuously of masked men, stolen papers, and burning records.

When he saw Monsieur Pérignon, the clerk's terror reached its climax; but believing that it would be wiser to tell all than to invent a fable that would only serve to make him suspected of complicity with the incendiaries, he fell at Monsieur Pérignon's feet and confessed all. The coincidence between the events of the night left no doubt in the magistrate's mind that they were a part of the same plot, and were intended to achieve the double purpose of carrying off both the guilty man and the proof of his guilt.

The presence of the prisoner's sister in his house, and her story of what had passed, left no room for doubt, even had he been in doubt. These masked men had come to Nantua with the intention of abducting Lucien de Fargas and the report of the prosecution, which had begun against him. Now for what purpose had the prisoner been abducted?

In the sincerity of her heart Diane did not doubt that her brother's companions, moved by generosity, had united, and had risked their own heads to save his.

But Monsieur Pérignon, whose mind was cold and logical, was not of the same opinion. He knew the actual reason for the prisoner's removal to Nantua; and that, having informed against some of his accomplices, he had since become an object of vengeance to the Companions of Jehu. Thus his opinion inclined him to the belief that, far from aiding him to escape from prison in order to restore his liberty, they had taken him away only to punish him more cruelly than the law would have done. The important thing, therefore, was to ascertain whether they had taken the road to Geneva or had returned to the interior of the department.

If they had taken the road to Geneva, thereby placing themselves beyond the frontier, it would prove that they had intended to save Lucien de Fargas and their own lives as well. If they had, on the contrary, gone into the interior of the department, it would be because they felt themselves strong enough to defy justice twice over—not only as highwaymen but as murderers.

At this suggestion, which came to her for the first time, Diane turned, and seizing Monsieur Pérignon's hand, cried: "Monsieur, monsieur! do you think they would dare commit such a crime?"

"The Companions of Jehu would dare anything, mademoiselle," replied the judge; "particularly that which one would suppose a crime they would not dare attempt."

"But," said Diane, trembling with terror, "how can we learn whether they have gone to the frontier or returned to the interior of France?"

"Oh! as to that, nothing is easier," replied the judge. "This is market-day, and ever since midnight the roads have been crowded with peasants who have been bringing their produce to market with their carts and donkeys. Ten men on horseback, accompanied by a prisoner, could never have passed unnoticed. We must find some people coming from Saint-Germain and Chérizy, and ask them if they saw such a party going in the direction of the Gex country, and

then we must find others who come from Vollognas and Peyriat, and find out whether they have seen a party of horsemen going toward Bourg."

Diane was so urgent, she laid so much stress upon the letter which Monsieur Pérignon's brother-in-law had given her to him, and, moreover, her situation as the sister of the man whose life was at stake aroused so much sympathy, that the magistrate consented to accompany her to the market-place.

There they learned that some horsemen had been seen on their way to Bourg.

Diane thanked Monsieur Pérignon, went to the Dauphin, ordered horses to be made ready, and started immediately for Bourg. There she alighted on the Place de la Prefecture, at the Hôtel des Grottes de Ceyzeriat, which had been recommended to her by Master René Servet.

CHAPTER VIII

A NEW COMPANION IS RECEIVED INTO THE SOCIETY OF JEHU UNDER THE NAME OF ALCIBIADES

DAY was breaking when Lucien de Fargas suffered the penalty to which he had condemned himself, when, on entering the Society of Jehu, he had sworn on his life never to betray his companions. It was impossible, on that day at least, to expose his body publicly as proposed. Its removal to the Place de la Prefecture at Bourg was therefore postponed until the following night.

On leaving the underground vault, Morgan turned to the messenger and said:

"Sir, you have seen what has just passed, you know with whom you are, and we have treated you like a brother. If it is your pleasure that we should prolong this session, and you desire to take leave of us, fatigued as we are, we will acquiesce and give you your liberty unconditionally. If, however, you do not intend to leave us until night, and if

the affair on which you have come is of great importance, grant us a few hours' sleep. Take some rest yourself, for you do not seem to have slept any more than we have. At noon, if you will remain so long, the council will hear you; and if my memory does not play me false, after having parted at our last meeting as companions-in-arms, we will part this time as friends."

"Gentlemen," said the messenger, "I was with you in heart long before I set foot in your domains. The oath which I shall take can add nothing, I trust, to the confidence which you have already reposed in me. At noon, if you please, I will present my letters of introduction to you."

Morgan shook hands with the messenger. Then, retracing their steps, the pretended monks returned through the underground passage, which they closed, carefully concealing the ring as before. They crossed the garden, skirted the cloister, re-entered the Chartreuse, and disappeared silently through different doors.

The younger of the two monks who had received the traveller remained with him, and showed him to his room, after which he bowed and withdrew. The guest of the Companions of Jehu noted with pleasure that he did not lock the door behind him. He went to the window, which opened from within, had no bars, and was almost on a level with the garden. The Companions of Jehu had evidently trusted him and had taken no precautions against him He drew the curtains of his bed, threw himself upon it all dressed as he was, and slept. At noon he was awakened by the opening of the door. The young monk entered.

"It is noon, brother," said he; "but if you are weary and wish to sleep longer the council will wait."

The messenger sprang from the bed, took a brush and comb from his valise, brushed his hair, combed his moustache, glanced over his attire, and signed to the monk that he was ready to follow him. He was led to the hall where he had supped. Four young men awaited him, all of whom were unmasked.

It was evident from their attire, the care which they had bestowed upon their toilet, and the refined courtesy of their greeting, that they belonged all four to the aristocracy, either by birth or fortune.

Had the messenger not detected this of himself, he had not been left long in doubt.

"Monsieur," said Morgan, "I have the honor of presenting to you the four chiefs of the society, Monsieur de Valensolle, Monsieur de Jayat, Monsieur de Ribier, and myself, the Comte de Sainte-Hermine. Monsieur de Valensolle, Monsieur de Jayat, Monsieur de Ribier, I have the honor of presenting to you Monsieur Coster de Saint-Victor, a messenger from General Georges Cadoudal."

The five young men bowed and exchanged the customary greetings.

"Gentlemen," said Coster de Saint-Victor, "it is by no means surprising that Monsieur Morgan should know my name, or that he should not hesitate to tell me your names, since we fought in the same ranks on the 13th Vendémiaire. That is why we were companions before we were friends. As Monsieur le Comte de Sainte-Hermine has said, I come from General Cadoudal, with whom I serve in Brittany. Here is the letter which accredits me to you."

At these words Coster drew from his pocket a letter bearing a seal stamped with the fleur-de-lis, and handed it to the Comte de Sainte-Hermine. The latter broke the seal and read aloud:

My dear Morgan—You will remember that at our meeting in the Rue des Postes, you were the first to offer, in case I should carry on the war alone, and without help either from home or abroad, to be my cashier. All our defenders have died with arms in their hands or have been shot. Stofflet and Charette have been shot, D'Autichamp has submitted to the Republic; I stand alone, unshaken in my faith, unassailable in my Morbihan.

An army of two or three thousand men will suffice to keep the field; but I must furnish arms, food, and ammunition for them, as they ask no pay. The English have sent us nothing since Quiberon.

If you will furnish the money, we will furnish the blood. God forbid that you should think that I mean by this that you would be sparing of yours when occasion offers. No, your devotion is so much greater than ours that ours grows pale before it. If we, who are fighting here, should be taken, we would only be shot, whereas you, in like circumstances, would die upon the scaffold. You write me that you have a considerable sum at my disposal. If I could be sure of receiving thirty-five or forty thousand francs every month that would suffice.

I send you our common friend, Coster de Saint-Victor; his name alone will tell you that you may have perfect confidence in him. I have given him the little catechism that will enable him to reach you. Give him the first forty thousand francs if you have them, and keep the rest for us; it will be safer in your hands than in mine. If you are persecuted beyond measure yonder, cross France and join me.

Far and near, I love and thank you.

GEORGES CADOUDAL,
General-in-chief of the Army of Brittany.

P.S.—They tell me, my dear Morgan, that you have a young brother of nineteen or twenty. If you do not think me unworthy to teach him his first lessons in warfare, send him to me; he shall be my aide-de-camp.

Morgan stopped reading and looked questioningly at his companions. Each one nodded affirmatively.

"Will you intrust me with the reply, gentlemen?" asked Morgan.

The question was received with a unanimous "Yes." Whereupon Morgan took up his pen, and wrote while Monsieur de Valensolle, Monsieur de Jayat, Monsieur de Ribier, and Coster de Saint-Victor were talking in an embrasure of the window. Five minutes later he called Coster de Saint-Victor and his three companions and read them the following letter:

MY DEAR GENERAL—We have received your kind and noble letter by your brave and excellent messenger. We have about a hundred and fifty thousand francs in hand, and are therefore prepared to do as you request. Our new

associate, to whom I have on my own authority given the name of Alcibiades, will start this evening, taking with him the first forty thousand francs.

Every month you will be able to procure the forty thousand francs at the same bank. In case of our death or dispersion, the money will be divided and buried in as many different places as we have times forty thousand francs. Subjoined you will find a list of the names of those who will know what the sums are and where they will be deposited.

Brother Alcibiades came just in time to be present at an execution; he has seen how we punish a traitor.

I thank you, my dear general, for your very kind offer to my brother, but I intend to keep him out of danger until he may be called upon to take my place. My elder brother was shot, bequeathing to me the duty of avenging his death. I shall probably die upon the scaffold, and I shall die bequeathing a similar duty to my brother. He in his turn will enter the road that we have trodden; and he will contribute to the good cause as we have done, or will die as we shall. No less powerful a motive could induce me, while asking your friendship for him, to deprive him of your immediate protection.

Send us again, as soon as you can spare him, our beloved brother Alcibiades; we shall be doubly glad to send you the message by such a messenger. MORGAN.

The letter was approved by all, folded, sealed, and then given to Coster de Saint-Victor.

At midnight the great portal of the Chartreuse opened to permit two horsemen to pass out. One, the bearer of the letter to Cadoudal, together with the desired sum, took the road to Macon. The other, carrying the corpse of Lucien de Fargas, was on his way to the Place de la Prefecture at Bourg.

In the breast of the corpse was the knife with which he had been killed; and attached to the handle by a thread was the letter which the condemned man had written just before his death.

CHAPTER IX

THE COMTE DE FARGAS

IT IS now necessary that our readers should learn who was the unfortunate young man whose body had been placed upon the Place de la Prefecture, and also who the young woman was who had alighted at the Hotel des Grottes de Ceyzeriat in the same square.

They were the last remaining scions of an old family of Provence. Their father, formerly a colonel and Chevalier de Saint-Louis, was born in the same town as Barras, with whom he had been intimate in his youth; namely, Fos-Emphoux. An uncle who had died at Avignon, making him his heir, had left him a house in that city. Thither he went in 1787, with his children, Lucien and Diane. Lucien at that time was twelve and Diane eight. That was the time of early revolutionary ardor, hopeful or fearful, as one was either a patriot or a royalist.

To those who are acquainted with Avignon, there were then in that city, as there are now and always have been, two cities in one—the Roman city and the French city.

There was the papal city, with its magnificent papal palace, its hundred churches, each more splendid than the other, and its innumerable bells, always ready to sound the tocsin of incendiarism or the knell of murder.

The French city, with its Rhone, its silk manufactories, and its crossroads going from north to south, from east to west, from Lyons to Marseilles, from Nîmes to Turin—the French city, the accursed city, longing for a king, jealous of its liberties, shuddering beneath the yoke of vassalage, a vassalage with the clergy for its lord.

The clergy—not the clergy as it has been from all times in the Gallican church, and such as we see it to-day, pious, tolerantly austere in its duties, living in the world to console and edify it, without mingling in its passions and its

joys; but the clergy such as cupidity and intrigue had made it, with its court abbés, rivalling the Roman abbés, idle, elegant, licentious, kings of fashion, autocrats of the salon, frequenters of houses of ill-fame. Do you want a type of these abbés? Take the Abbé Maury, proud as a duke, insolent as a lackey, son of a shoemaker, more aristocratic than the son of a great lord.

We have said, Avignon, Roman city; let us add, Avignon, city of hatreds. The heart of the child, born elsewhere free from the taint of hate, came into the world in the midst of hereditary hatred, bequeathed from father to son, and from son to son in turn, a diabolical inheritance for his children. In such a city every one was forced to make definite choice, and act a part in accordance with the importance of his position.

The Comte de Fargas had been a royalist before coming to Avignon. When he settled there, in order to meet his equals he was forced to become a fanatic. From that time he was looked upon as one of the royalist leaders and one of the standard-bearers of religion.

The time of which we are speaking was, as we have said, the year '87, the dawn of our independence. And so, at the first cry of liberty which was uttered in France, the French city rose full of joy and hope. The moment had come for her to contest aloud the concession made by a young queen under age, of a city, a province, and half a million souls, in order to atone for her crimes. By what right had she sold these souls forever to a foreign master?

All France hastened to the Champ de Mars, to meet in the fraternal embrace of the Federation. All Paris had labored to prepare that immense piece of ground; where sixty-seven years after the time of this fraternal embrace it was to invite all Europe to the Universal Exposition—the triumph of peace and industry over war. Avignon alone was excluded from this great love-feast; Avignon alone had no part in this universal communion. Was not Avignon, then, a part of France?

Avignon named deputies who went to the papal legate and gave him twenty-four hours in which to leave the city. During the night the Roman party, with the Comte de Fargas at its head, by way of revenge, amused itself by hanging a manikin wearing the tri-colored cockade.

It is possible to direct the course of the Rhone, to canal the Durance, to dam up the fierce torrents which, on the melting of the winter's snow, precipitate themselves in liquid avalanches from the peaks of Mont Ventoux; but this terrible living flood, this human torrent which rushed through the steep incline of the streets of Avignon, when once loosed, once launched on its way, heaven itself put forth no hand to stay its course.

At sight of the manikin with the national colors dangling at the end of a cord, the French city rose upon its very foundations with shrieks of rage. The Comte de Fargas, who knew his Avignonese, retired, on the night of this clever expedition which he had led, to the house of one of his friends in the valley of the Vaucluse. Four of his retainers, who were rightly suspected of having taken part in this expedition, were torn from his home and strung up in the manikin's stead. In order to accomplish this they seized ropes forcibly from a worthy man named Lescuyer, who was afterward falsely accused by the royalists of having volunteered to furnish them. This occurred on the 11th of June, 1790.

The French city as a unit wrote to the National Assembly and gave itself to France, and with itself its Rhone, its commerce, the Midi, and the half of Provence. The National Assembly, was in one of its reactionary moods; it did not wish to quarrel with the pope, and it temporized with the king; the matter was therefore postponed.

From that moment the patriotic movement in Avignon became a revolt, and the pope was empowered to punish and repress. Pope Pius VI. ordered the annulment of all that had been done in the Comtat-Venaissin, and the reestablishment of the privileges of the nobles and the clergy,

and also that of the Inquisition in all its rigor. The Comte de Fargas returned triumphantly to Avignon, and not only no longer concealed the fact that he had strung up the manikin with the tri-colored cockade, but even boasted of it. No one dared to say anything. The pontifical decrees were posted.

One man, one only, dared, in open day, in the sight of all, to go straight to the wall on which the decree was affixed and tear it down. His name was Lescuyer. He was the man who had already been accused of furnishing ropes to hang the royalists. It will be remembered that he had been wrongfully accused. He was not a young man, and he therefore had not been swayed by the passions of youth. No, he was almost an old man, and not even a native of the country. He was a Frenchman of Picardy, impulsive and reflective at the same time. He was a notary, who had long been established at Avignon. This act of his was a crime at which all Roman Avignon trembled—a crime so great that the Virgin wept over it.

You see, Avignon is already Italy; it must have its miracles at any cost, and if Heaven would not provide them, some one would be found to invent them. This particular miracle occurred in the church of the Cordeliers. The crowd flocked thither.

A report was started at the same time which brought the excitement to a climax. A large chest, tightly sealed, had been carried through the city. This chest had excited the curiosity of the people of Avignon. What did it contain? Two hours later it was no longer one chest, but eighteen, which had been seen going in the direction of the Rhone. As for their contents, a porter had revealed that they were the treasures of the Mont-de-Piété, which the French party were carrying with them in their departure from Avignon. The treasures of the Mont-de-Piété —that is to say, the possessions of the poor! The more wretched a city the richer its pawnshops. Few cities could boast such wealth in their pawnshops as could

Avignon. This was no longer a matter of political opinion, it was a theft, an infamous theft. Whites and Blues, or, in other words, royalists and patriots, rushed to the church of the Cordeliers, not to see the miracle, but to shout that the municipality should answer to them for this crime.

Monsieur de Fargas was naturally at the head of those who shouted the loudest.

CHAPTER X

THE TROUILLASSE TOWER

NOW Lescuyer, the man of the ropes, the patriot who had torn down the decrees of the Holy Father, the quondam Picard notary, was secretary to the municipality. His name was thrown to the crowds as not only having participated in the crimes already mentioned, but as having signed the order to the keeper at the Mont-de-Piété to allow the property to be taken away.

Four men were sent out to seize Lescuyer and to bring him to the church. They found him in the street on his way to the municipality. The four men threw themselves upon him, and amid ferocious cries they dragged him to the church.

In the church, Lescuyer realized from the flaming eyes fixed upon him, the outstretched hands which menaced him, and the cries demanding his death, that he was in one of those circles of hell forgotten by Dante. His only idea was that this hatred was inspired because of the ropes which had been taken forcibly from his shop, and the destruction of the pontifical decrees.

He ascended the pulpit, thinking to convert it into a tribunal of justice, and in the voice of a man who is not only not ashamed of what he has done, but who would repeat it, he began: "Citizens, I believed the Revolution necessary, and I have acted accordingly."

The Whites knew that if Lescuyer, whose death they desired, should explain, Lescuyer was saved. That was not what they wanted. Obeying a sign from the Comte de Fargas, they threw themselves upon him, tore him from the pulpit, and thrust him into the midst of the howling mob, which dragged him toward the altar, uttering that terrible cry, which combines the hiss of the serpent and the roar of the tiger—that murderous "*Zou! zou! zou!*" peculiar to the populace of Avignon.

Lescuyer knew that sinister cry. He tried to take refuge at the foot of the altar. He fell there. A laborer, armed with a club, dealt him such a blow on the head that the weapon was broken in two.

Then they flung themselves upon the poor body, and with that awful mixture of ferocity and gayety peculiar to Southern people, the men sang as they danced upon his body, while the women, that he might the more fitly atone for the blasphemies which he had uttered against the pope, cut off his lips, or rather scalloped them with their scissors. Then from the midst of that terrible group came a cry, or rather a death-rattle. It said: "In the name of Heaven, in the name of the Virgin, in the name of humanity, kill me at once!"

This groan was heard and understood. With one accord the crowd drew back. They left the wretched, mangled, bleeding man to taste his death-agony. It lasted five hours, during which, amid bursts of laughter, jeers, insults and mockeries, the poor body lay quivering on the steps of the altar. That is how they kill at Avignon.

Stay, and you will see that there is still another way.

While Lescuyer was undergoing his mortal agony, it occurred to one of the French party to go to the Mont-de-Piété (a thing they might well have done at first), to see if the story of the theft were true. He found everything in order there; not the smallest article had been removed.

It was therefore not as an accomplice of theft, but as a patriot, that Lescuyer had been murdered.

There was at that time a man in Avignon who ruled the destinies of that party which in times of revolution is neither white nor blue, but blood-hued. All these terrible leaders of the South have acquired such fatal celebrity that it suffices to name them for every one, even the least educated, to recognize them. This was the famous Jourdan. Braggart and liar, he had made the common people believe that it was he who had cut off the head of the governor of the Bastille; and so they called him "Jourdan Coupe-Tête." This was not his real name; it was Mathieu Jouve. He was not a Provençal; he came from Puy-en-Velay. He had once been a muleteer on the steep heights which surrounded his native town; afterward he became a soldier, without seeing war (war might have perhaps humanized him), then an innkeeper at Paris. At Avignon he dealt in madder.

He assembled three hundred men, took possession of the gates of the city, left half his troops there, and with the rest marched upon the church of the Cordeliers, preceded by two pieces of artillery. He set the battery up in front of the church and fired at random. The assassins dispersed like a flock of frightened birds, some escaping through the windows, others by way of the sacristy, leaving several dead upon the church steps. Jourdan and his men stepped over these corpses and entered the sacred precincts.

There was nothing there save the statue of the Virgin and the unfortunate Lescuyer. He was still breathing, and when they asked him who had assassinated him, he gave the name, not of those who had dealt the blows, but of the man who had given the order to strike.

It was the Comte de Fargas.

Jourdan and his men were careful not to despatch the dying man, for his agony was a most potent means of exciting the people. They took this remnant of pulsating life, which was three-fourths dead, and carried it along, bleeding, panting, with the death-rattle in its throat. They shouted: "Fargas! Fargas! We must have Fargas!"

Every one fled at the sight, shutting doors and windows. At the end of an hour Jourdan and his men were masters of the city. Lescuyer died, and no one knew when he drew his last breath; but it mattered little, for they no longer needed his agony.

Jourdan took advantage of the terror he had inspired; and in order to assure the victory to his party, he arrested, or had arrested, eighty persons, assassins or alleged assassins, of Lescuyer, and, in consequence, accomplices of Fargas. As for the latter, he was not arrested as yet; but they were sure that he would be, since all the gates of the city were carefully guarded and the Comte de Fargas was known to everybody.

Of the eighty persons arrested, more than thirty had not even set foot within the church; but when chance affords such an excellent opportunity of ridding one's self of enemies, it should be accepted. These eighty persons were thrust into the Trouillasse Tower.

This was the tower in which the Inquisition was wont to put its victims to the torture. The greasy soot from the funereal pyre which consumed human flesh can still be seen to this very day along the walls, and also all the implements of torture, which have been carefully preserved—the caldron, the oven, the wooden horses, the chains, the oublettes, yes, even to the old bones—nothing is wanting.

It was in this tower, built by Clement IV., that they confined the eighty prisoners. When they were safely lodged there, their captors were much embarrassed.

Who should try them? There were no legally appointed courts save those of the pope. Should they kill these wretches as they had killed Lescuyer? As we have said, there was at least a third of them, possibly half, who not only had taken no part in the assassination, but who had not even set foot in the church. To make an end of them was the only safe way; the slaughter would pass under the head of reprisals.

But executioners were needed to kill these eighty people

A sort of tribunal organized by Jourdan sat in one of the halls of the palace. They had a clerk named Raphel; a president, half Italian, half French, an orator in the popular dialect, named Barbe Savournin de la Roua; then there were three or four poor devils, a baker, a charcoal-burner (their names have been lost, because they were of low estate). These were the ones who exclaimed: "We must kill them all! If any escape they will bear witness against us."

Executioners were wanting; there were scarcely twenty men in the courtyard, all belonging to the lowest classes in Avignon—a wig-maker, a women's-shoemaker, a cobbler, a mason, a carpenter, all with weapons caught up at haphazard. One had a sword, another a bayonet, this one a bar of iron, that one a piece of wood that had been hardened in the fire. They were all shivering in a fine October rain. It would be difficult to make assassins of such creatures. Nonsense! is there anything difficult for the devil? There is a moment in such events when Providence seems to abandon its followers; then it is Satan's turn.

Satan in person entered this cold and muddy court disguised in the appearance, form and face of an apothecary of the neighborhood, named Mende. He set up a table, lighted by two lanterns. Upon it he placed glasses, pitchers, jugs, and bottles. What was the infernal beverage that was contained in these mysterious receptacles? No one knows; but its effect is well-known. All those who drank of that diabolical liquor were seized with a sudden fever that raged through their veins—the lust of blood and murder. After that they needed only to be shown the door, and they hurled themselves into the cells.

The massacre lasted all night. All night cries, shrieks and moans echoed through the darkness. They killed them all, men and women. It took a long time, for, as we have said, the executioners were drunk and poorly armed. However, the task was finished after a time. As soon as the victims were killed they were thrown, dead and wounded together, into the pit of the Trouillasse Tower, a distance

of some sixty feet down. The men were thrown first, and then the women. At nine o'clock in the morning, after the massacre had lasted twelve hours, a voice cried out from the depths of the sepulchre: "For God's sake, come and finish me!"

One man, the armorer Bouffier, leaned over the hole; the others did not dare.

"Who called?" they asked him.

"It was Lami," he replied, drawing back.

"Well," asked the assassins, "what do you see down there?"

"A queer marmalade," he replied; "all pell-mell, men and women, priests and pretty girls. It is enough to make one die of laughing."

At that moment cries of grief and shouts of triumph made themselves heard, and the name of Fargas was repeated by a thousand voices. It was indeed the count whom they were bringing to Jourdan Coupe-Tête. He had just been found hidden in a cask in the Hôtel Palais-Royal. He was half naked, and covered with such immense quantities of blood that they did not know but what he would fall dead when they loosened their grip.

CHAPTER XI

BROTHER AND SISTER

THE executioners, who might have been thought weary, were only drunk. Even as the sight of wine seemingly gives strength to a drunkard, so does the sight of blood revive the forces of the assassin. All these cut-throats, who were lying in the courtyard half asleep, opened their eyes and jumped to their feet at the name of Fargas.

He, far from being dead, had received only some slight wounds. But when he found himself in the presence of

these fiends, believing his death to be inevitable, and having but the one idea of making it as swift and painless as possible, he threw himself upon the man who was nearest to him, and bit him so savagely in the cheek that the man thought of nothing but putting an end to the horrible pain. He instinctively thrust out his hand, and his knife, coming in contact with the count's breast, was buried into it up to the hilt. The count fell dead without a cry.

Then they did to his corpse what they had been cheated of doing with the living man. Each man flung himself upon it, struggling to secure a bit of his flesh. When men reach such a point there is little difference between them and the South Sea Islanders who live on human flesh.

They lighted a pile of wood and threw Fargas's body upon it; and as if no new god or goddess could be glorified without human sacrifice, the Liberty of the pontifical city had on the same day its patriot martyr in the person of Lescuyer and its royalist martyr in Fargas.

While these things were taking place at Avignon, the two children, ignorant of these dire events, were living in a little house which was called the Three Cypresses, because of three trees which stood in front of it. Their father had gone in the morning to Avignon, as he often did, and he had been stopped at one of the gates as he was on his way back to them.

The first night passed without occasioning them much uneasiness. As he had a house in the city as well as one in the country, the Comte de Fargas often stopped a day or two at Avignon, for business, it might be, or for pleasure.

Lucien preferred to live in the country, of which he was very fond. He and his sister were alone there except for the cook and one other servant. He was passionately attached to Diane, who was three years younger than himself. She returned his affection with the ardor of Southern natures, which can neither love nor hate by halves.

The young people were brought up together and were never parted. Although of different sexes they had had

the same masters and had pursued the same studies; with the result that at ten Diane showed slight resemblances to a boy, and Lucien at thirteen gave evidence of girlish traits.

As their country-seat was not more than two miles distant from Avignon, the tradesfolk brought them word on the second day of the murders which had been committed. The two children were much alarmed on their father's account. Lucien gave orders to saddle his horse; but Diane would not let him go alone. She had a horse like her brother's and was quite as good an equestrian as he; she therefore saddled her horse herself, and they set off at a gallop for the city.

They had only just arrived and had begun to make inquiries, when they learned that their father had been arrested and hurried to the papal palace, where a tribunal was sitting in justice upon the royalists. As soon as they heard this, Diane set off at a sharp gallop and hastened up the slope that led to the old fortress. Lucien followed her at a short distance. They reached the courtyard almost at the same time, and perceived the smoking remnants of the fagots which had consumed their father's body. Several of the assassins recognized them and cried out: "Death to the wolf's cubs!"

At the same time they endeavored to seize their bridles in order to force the orphans to dismount. One of the men who had carried his hand to the bridle of Diane's horse received a stinging blow across the face from her riding-whip. This was only an act of legitimate defence, but it exasperated the assassins, who redoubled their cries and threats. But just then Jourdan Coupe-Tête came forward. Whether from satiety or from a tardy sense of justice a ray of humanity shone in upon his heart.

"Yesterday," he said, "in the heat of the struggle and the desire for vengeance, we may possibly have mistaken the innocent for the guilty; but to-day we cannot permit such an error. The Comte de Fargas was guilty of insulting France and of murdering human beings. He hung the

national colors on an infamous gibbet and he incited the murder of Lescuyer. The Comte de Fargas deserved death and you meted it out to him. It is well. France and humanity are avenged! But his children have never participated in an act of barbarity or injustice, and they are innocent. Let them go in peace therefore, that they may not be able to say of the patriots, as we can say of the royalists, that we are assassins."

Diane did not wish to flee, and to her mind to go without wreaking vengeance was equivalent to fleeing; but she and her brother could do nothing by themselves. Lucien took the bridle of her horse and led her away.

When the two orphans reached home they burst into tears and threw themselves into each other's arms; they had no one left in the world to love except themselves.

Their mutual love was a holy and fraternal thing to see. Thus they grew up together until Lucien was twenty-one and Diane eighteen.

The Thermidorean reaction occurred at this time. Their name was a pledge of their political creed. They went to no one; but others sought them out. Lucien listened coldly to the propositions which were made to him, and demanded time for reflection. Diane seized upon them eagerly, and signified that she would undertake to convince her brother. Indeed, no sooner were they alone than she confronted him with the great question "Noblesse oblige."

Lucien had been educated as a royalist and a Christian. He had to avenge his father, and his sister exerted great influence over him. He therefore gave his word. From that moment, that is to say toward the end of 1796, he became a member of the Company of Jehu, called *Du Midi*.

We know the rest.

It would be difficult to describe the violence of Diane's emotions from the time of her brother's arrest until he was transferred to the department of the Ain. She then took all the money of which she could dispose and started in a post-chaise for Nantua.

We know that she arrived too late, and that at Nantua she learned of her brother's abduction and the burning of the registry, and that, thanks to the judge's acumen, she was made cognizant of the motive of the two exploits. She reached the Hôtel des Grottes de Ceyzeriat that same day about noon, and upon her arrival she hastened at once to present herself at the prefecture, where she related what had occurred at Nantua, which was still unknown at Bourg.

This was by no means the first time that word of the prowess of the Companions of Jehu had reached the prefect's ear.

Bourg was a royalist town. Most of its inhabitants sympathized with the young outlaws. Frequently, when giving orders that one of their number be watched or arrested, the prefect had been conscious of an invisible net, drawing around him, and although he could not see clearly, he felt the source of some hidden resistance which paralyzed his authority. But this time the accusation was definite and precise; armed men had taken their accomplice by force from prison; they had, again by force, compelled the registry clerk to give them the paper which compromised the names of four of their accomplices in the Midi. These men, finally, had been seen on their way to Bourg, after the perpetration of their double crime.

He summoned the commander of the gendarmerie, the president of the court, and the police commissioner to appear before himself and Diane; he made Diane repeat her exhaustive accusation against these formidable unknown persons; he declared that within three days he proposed to have definite information; and he asked Diane to spend those three days at Bourg. Diane divined how great an interest the prefect would necessarily take in the apprehension of those whom she was seeking. She returned at nightfall to the hotel, worn out with fatigue, and dying of hunger, for she had scarcely eaten anything since she had left Avignon.

She supped and retired, sleeping that deep sleep of youth which conquers grief.

The next morning a great uproar beneath her windows aroused her. She rose and peered through her blinds, but she could discern naught save an immense crowd surging in every direction; but something in the nature of a presentiment told her that a fresh trial awaited her.

She put on her dressing-gown, and without waiting to smooth her hair, which had become disordered during her slumber, she opened the casement and looked over the balcony.

But no sooner had she cast a glance at the street, than she rushed from her room with a loud cry, darted down the stairs, and threw herself, mad with grief, dishevelled and ghastly pale, upon the body which was lying in the centre of the group, crying: "My brother! my brother!"

CHAPTER XII

IN WHICH THE READER WILL MEET SOME OLD ACQUAINTANCES

WE MUST now ask our readers to follow us to Milan, where, as we have said, Bonaparte, who no longer called himself *Buonaparte*, had his headquarters.

The same day, and at the very hour when Diane de Fargas recovered her brother in so pitiful and tragic a manner, three men came out of the barracks of the Army of Italy, while three others issued from the adjacent barracks, which were occupied by the Army of the Rhine. General Bonaparte had demanded a reinforcement after his first victories, and two thousand men had been detached from Moreau's army, and sent, under command of Bernadotte, to the Army of Italy.

The six men made their way toward the eastern gate, walking in two separate groups, each at a little distance from the other. This was the gate behind which occurred the numerous duels which resulted from personal rivalry

of valor, and the differences of opinion between the soldiers from the North and those who had always fought in the South.

An army is always modelled upon the characteristics of its general. His peculiarities extend to his officers, and from them they spread to the soldiers. The division of the Rhine, which had come South under Bernadotte's command, was formed upon Moreau's model.

The royalist faction looked longingly toward Moreau and Pichegru. The latter had been all ready to yield, but he had wearied of the indecision of the Prince de Condé. Nor had he been willing to introduce the enemy into France without having determined beforehand the conditions which should circumscribe the rights of the prince whom he was admitting, as well as those of the people who were to receive him. Nothing had actually taken place between himself and the Prince de Condé except a correspondence which had borne no fruit. He had, moreover, resolved to bring about this revolution, not through his military influence, but through that of the high position which his fellow-citizens had bestowed upon him in making him president of the Five Hundred.

Moreau's Republicanism could not be shaken. Careless, moderate, unemotional, with no taste for politics beyond his capacity, he held himself in reserve, sufficiently flattered by the praise which his friends and the royalists had bestowed upon his masterly retreat from the Danube, which they likened to that of Xenophon.

His army, therefore, was like him, cold, phlegmatic and submissive to his discipline. The Army of Italy, on the contrary, was composed of our Southern revolutionists—brave hearts who were as impulsive in their opinions as in their courage.

Having been the centre for more than a year and a half of the glory which the French arms were reaping before the eyes of all Europe, the attention of that continent was fixed upon them. It could pride itself, not upon masterly re-

treats, but upon victories. Instead of being forgotten by the government, as were the armies of the Rhine and the Sambre-et-Meuse, generals, officers and soldiers were overwhelmed with praise and honors, gorged with money and sated with pleasure. Serving first under General Bonaparte —that is to say, under the star which had been shedding a light so brilliant that it had dazzled all Europe—then under Generals Masséna, Joubert, and Augereau, who set the example of the most ardent republicanism, they were, by order of Bonaparte, kept informed of the events which were transpiring at Paris (through the medium of the journals which the general circulated among them), that is to say, of a reaction which threatened to equal that of Vendémiaire. To these men—who did not form their opinions by discussion, but who received them ready-made—the Directory, the heir and successor of the Convention, was still the revolutionary government to whom their services were devoted, as in 1792. They asked but one thing, now that they had conquered the Austrians and thought that they had nothing more to do in Italy, and that was to cross the Alps again, in order to put the aristocrats in Paris to the sword.

These two groups on their way to the Eastern gate presented a fair sample of the two armies.

One—which, as its uniform denoted, belonged to that tireless infantry which, starting from the foot of the Bastille, had made the tour of the world—consisted of Sergeant-major Faraud, who had married the Goddess of Reason, and his two inseparable companions, Groseiller and Vincent, who had both attained to the rank of sergeant.

The other group belonged to the cavalry, and was composed of the chasseur Falou—who, it will be remembered, had been appointed quartermaster-general by Pichegru—and two of his comrades, one a quartermaster, the other a brigadier.

Falou, who belonged to the Army of the Rhine, had not advanced a step since his promotion by Pichegru.

Faraud, it is true, had remained in the same rank which

he had received at the lines of Weissembourg—the rank which stops so many poor fellows whose education will not permit of their taking the examination necessary for a commission. But he had been twice mentioned in the order of the day of the Army of Italy, and Bonaparte had ordered him brought before him, and had said to him: "Faraud, you are a fine fellow."

The result was that Faraud was as well satisfied with these two orders of the day, and Bonaparte's words, as though he had been promoted to the rank of a sub-lieutenancy.

Now, Quartermaster-general Falou and Sergeant-major Faraud had had a few words on the previous evening, which had seemed sufficient to them to warrant this promenade to the Eastern gate—in other words, to use the terms employed under such circumstances, the two friends were about to refresh themselves with a sword-thrust or two.

And, in fact, as soon as they were outside the gate, the seconds of both parties began to look for a suitable spot where each would have the advantage of sun and ground. When this was found, the seconds notified the principals, who at once followed them, apparently satisfied by their choice, and promptly prepared to utilize these advantages by throwing aside their foraging caps, coats and waistcoats. Then each turned back the right sleeve as far as the elbow.

Faraud had a flaming heart and the words, "The Goddess of Reason," tattooed upon his arm.

Falou, less concentrated in his affections, had this Epicurean device, "Long live wine! Long live love!"

The fight was to be conducted with the infantry swords known as *briquets*. Each received his weapon from one of his seconds and fell upon his adversary.

"What the devil can one do with such a kitchen knife as this," growled chasseur Falou, who was accustomed to the long cavalry sabre and who handled the short sword as if it had been a pen. "This is only fit to cut cabbages and to scrape carrots."

"It will serve also," said Faraud with that peculiar movement of the neck which we have already noticed in him, "it will serve also, for those who are not afraid to come to close quarters, to shave an enemy's mustache."

And making a feint to thrust at his adversary's thigh, he thrust at the other's head and was successfully parried.

"Oh!" said Falou, "very good, sergeant, the mustaches are according to orders. It is forbidden to cut them off in our regiment, and, above all, to let any one else cut them off. Those who permit such a thing are usually punished. Punished for it," he repeated, watching his chance, "punished for it by a touch on the wrist." And with such rapidity that his opponent had no time to parry, Falou made the thrust which is known by the portion of the body at which it is aimed. The blood spurted from Faraud's arm on the instant, but, furious at being wounded, he cried: "It is nothing. It is nothing. Let us go on!"

And he stood on guard.

But the seconds sprang between the combatants, declaring that honor was satisfied.

Thereupon Faraud threw down his weapon and held out his arm. One of the seconds drew a handkerchief from his pocket and, with a dexterity that proved he was no novice at the art, bound up the wound. He was in the midst of this operation, when a group of eight or ten horsemen appeared from behind a clump of trees not twenty yards distant.

"The deuce! The commander-in-chief!" said Falou.

The soldiers looked for some way of escaping the notice of their chief; but he had already seen them, and was urging his horse toward them with whip and spur. They stood motionless, saluting with one hand, and with the other at their side. The blood was streaming from Faraud's arm.

CHAPTER XIII

CITIZENS AND MESSIEURS

BONAPARTE drew rein four paces from them, making a motion to his staff to stop where they were. Immovable upon his horse, which was less impassive than he, stooping slightly from the heat and the malady from which he was suffering, his piercing eyes half hidden by the drooping upper lid, and darting flashes through the lashes, he resembled a bronze statue.

"So you are fighting a duel here," he said, in his incisive voice, "when you know that I do not approve of duels. The blood of Frenchmen belongs to France and should be shed for France alone." Then, looking from one to the other, and finally letting his glance rest upon Faraud, "How does it happen that a fine fellow like you, Faraud—"

Bonaparte at this time made it a matter of principle to retain in his memory the faces of the men who distinguished themselves, so that he could upon necessity call them by name.

Faraud started with delight when he heard the general mention his name, and raised himself on tiptoe. Bonaparte saw the movement, and, smiling inwardly, he continued: "How does it happen that a fine fellow like you, who has been twice mentioned in the order of the day, once at Lodi and again at Rivoli, should disobey my orders thus? As for your opponent, whom I do not know—"

The commander-in-chief purposely emphasized these words. Falou frowned, for the words pierced him like a needle in the side.

"I beg your pardon, general," he said; "the reason you do not know me is because you are too young; because

you were not with the Army of the Rhine at the battle of Dawendorff, and at Froeschwiller, as well as the recapture of the lines of Weissembourg. If you had been there—"

"I was at Toulon," said Bonaparte, dryly; "and if you drove the Prussians out of France at Weissembourg, I did as much for the English at Toulon, which was fully as important."

"That is true," said Falou; "and we even put your name on the order of the day. I was wrong to say that you were too young; I acknowledge it and beg your pardon. But I was right in saying that you were not there, since you yourself admit that you were at Toulon."

"Go on," said Bonaparte; "have you anything more to say?"

"Yes, general," replied Falou.

"Then say it," replied Bonaparte; "but as we are Republicans, be good enough to call me citizen-general when you address me."

"Bravo!" cried Faraud; and his seconds, Groseiller and Vincent, nodded approvingly.

Falou's seconds did not betray either their approval or disapproval.

"Well, citizen-general!" said Falou, with that familiarity of speech which the principle of equality had introduced into the army, "if you had been at Dawendorff, faith! you would have seen me save General Abatucci's life during a charge of cavalry, and he is as good as any man."

"Ah!" said Bonaparte, "thanks! I believe that Abatucci is a sort of cousin of mine."

Falou picked up his cavalry sabre and showed it to Bonaparte. He was much astonished to find a general's sword in the possession of a quartermaster-general.

"It was on that occasion that General Pichegru, who is as good as any man"—and he emphasized this characterization—"seeing the state to which my poor sabre had been reduced, made me a present of his, which is not altogether according to orders, as you see."

"Go on," said Bonaparte; "for I see that you have something more to tell me."

"I have this to tell you also, general. If you had been at Froeschwiller, on the day that General Hoche offered six hundred francs on the Prussian cannon, you would have seen me capture one of those cannon, and also have seen me made quartermaster for it."

"And did you receive those six hundred francs?"

Falou shook his head.

"We gave them up to the widows and children of the poor fellows who died on the day of Dawendorff, and I took only my pay, which was in one of the Prince de Condé's chests."

"Brave, disinterested fellow! Go on," said the general; "I like to see such men as you, who have no journalists to sound their praises or to decry them, pronouncing their own panegyrics."

"And then," continued Falou, "had you been at the storming of the lines of Weissembourg, you would have known that when three Prussians attacked me I killed two. True, I did not parry in time to escape a blow from the third, of which this is the scar—you see where I mean—to which I replied with a thrust with the point that sent my man to rejoin his two comrades. I was made quartermaster-general for that."

"And is this all true?" asked Bonaparte.

"Oh! as for that," said Faraud, drawing near, and bringing his bandaged hand to the salute, "if the quartermaster needs a witness, I can testify that he has told nothing but the truth, and that he has said too little rather than too much. It is well known in the Army of the Rhine."

"Well," said Bonaparte, looking benevolently at the two men who had just been exchanging blows, and of whom one was now sounding the other's praises, "I am delighted to make your acquaintance, citizen Falou. I trust that you will do as well in the Army of Italy as you

have in the Army of the Rhine. But how does it happen that two such fine fellows as you should be enemies?"

"We, citizen-general?" exclaimed Falou. "We are not enemies.'

"Why the deuce were you fighting then, if you are not enemies?"

"Oh!" said Faraud, with his customary twist of the neck, "we were just fighting for the sake of fighting."

"But suppose that I tell you I wish to know why you fought?"

Faraud looked at Falou as if to ask his permission.

"Since the citizen-general wants to know, I see no reason why we should conceal it," said the latter.

"Well, we fought—we fought—because he called me monsieur."

"And what do you want to be called?"

"Citizen, by Heaven!" replied Faraud. "We paid dearly enough for that title to want to keep it. I am not an aristocrat like those messieurs of the Army of the Rhine."

"You hear, citizen-general," said Falou, tapping impatiently with his foot and laying his hand on the hilt of his sabre; "he calls us aristocrats."

"He was wrong, and so were you when you called him monsieur," replied the commander-in-chief. "We are all citizens of the same country, children of the same family, sons of the same mother. We are fighting for the Republic; and the moment when kings recognize it is not the time for good men like you to deny it. To what division do you belong?" he continued, addressing Quartermaster Falou.

"To the Bernadotte division," replied Falou.

"Bernadotte," repeated Bonaparte—"Bernadotte, a volunteer, who was only a sergeant-major in '89; a gallant soldier, who was promoted on the battlefield by Kléber to the rank of brigadier-general, who was made a general of division after the victories of Fleurus and Juliers, and who took Maestricht and Altdorf! Bernadotte encouraging aristocrats

in his army! I thought he was a Jacobin. And you, Faraud, to what corps do you belong?"

"To that of citizen-general Augereau. No one can accuse him of being an aristocrat. He is like you, citizen-general. And so, when we heard these men of the Sambre-et-Meuse calling us monsieur, we said to each other, 'A cut of the sabre for each monsieur! Is it agreed?' 'Agreed!' And since then we have stood up here perhaps a dozen times, our division against that of Bernadotte. To-day it is my turn to pay the piper. To-morrow it will be a monsieur."

"To-morrow it will be no one," said Bonaparte, imperiously. "I will have no duelling in the army. I have said it, and I repeat it."

"But—" murmured Faraud.

"I will talk of this with Bernadotte. In the meantime you will please preserve intact the Republican traditions; and whether you belong to the Sambre-et-Meuse, or to the Army of Italy, you will address each other as citizen. You will each of you pass twenty-four hours in the guard-house as an example. And now shake hands and go away arm in arm like good citizens."

The two soldiers stepped up to each other and exchanged a frank and manly grasp of the hand. Then Faraud threw his vest over his left shoulder and passed his arm through that of Falou.

The seconds did the same, and all six entered the city by the Eastern gate, and went quietly toward the barracks.

General Bonaparte looked after them with a smile, murmuring: "Brave hearts! Cæsar crossed the Rubicon with men like that; but it is not yet time to do as Cæsar did." Then he cried: "Murat!"

A young man of twenty-four, with black hair and mustache, and a quick, intelligent eye, dashed forward on his horse, and sprang instantly to the general's side.

"Murat," he said, "you will start at once for Vicenza, where Augereau is at present. You will bring him to me

at the Palace Serbelloni. You will tell him that the ground-floor is unoccupied, and that he can have it."

"The deuce!" murmured those who had seen but had not heard; "it looks as though General Bonaparte were out of humor."

CHAPTER XIV

THE CAUSE OF CITIZEN-GENERAL BONAPARTE'S ILL-HUMOR

BONAPARTE returned to the Palace Serbelloni. He was indeed in a bad humor.

While he was hardly at the beginning of his career, had hardly reached the dawn of his vast renown, calumny was already persecuting him with her endeavors to rob him of the merit of his incredible victories, which were comparable only to those of Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar. Men said that Carnot laid out his military plans, and that his pretended military genius merely followed step by step the written directions of the Directory. They also said that he knew nothing of the matter of administration, and that Berthier, his chief of staff, attended to everything.

He saw the struggle which was taking place in Paris against the partisans of royalty, then represented by the Clichy Club, as they had been represented two years earlier by the Section Le Peletier.

Bonaparte's two brothers, in their private correspondence, urged him to take a stand between the royalists, that is to say the counter-revolution, and the Directory, which still stood for the Republic, greatly diverted no doubt from its original starting-point and its original aim, but the only standard nevertheless around which republicans could rally.

In the majority of the two councils ill-will against him was patent. Party leaders were incessantly wounding his self-esteem by their speeches and their writings. They belittled his glory, and decried the merits of the admirable army with which he had conquered five others.

He had attempted to enter civil affairs. He had been ambitious to become one of the five directors in the stead of the one who had resigned.

If he had succeeded in that attempt he was confident that he would in the end have been sole director. But they had objected to his age—twenty-eight—as an obstacle, since he would have to be at least thirty to become a director. He had therefore withdrawn, not daring to ask an exception in his favor, and thus violate that constitution for the maintenance of which he had fought on the 13th Vendémiaire.

The directors, moreover, were far from desiring him for a colleague. The members of this body did not disguise the jealousy with which Bonaparte's genius inspired them, nor did they hesitate to proclaim that they were offended at his haughty manner and assumption of independence.

It grieved him to think that they styled him a furious demagogue, and called him the "Man of the 13th Vendémiaire," whereas, on the 13th Vendémiaire, he had been only the "Man of the Revolution," in other words, of the public interests.

His instinctive inclination was, if not toward the Revolution, at least against the royalists. He was therefore pleased to note the republican spirit of the Revolution and to encourage it. His first success at Toulon had been against the royalists, his victory on the 13th Vendémiaire had also been against royalist forces. What were the five armies which he had defeated? Armies which supported the cause of the Bourbons; in other words, royalist armies.

But that which, at this period of all others, when he was wavering between the safe rôle of Monk and the dangerous rôle of Cæsar, made him fling high the banner of the Republic, was his innate presentiment of his future grandeur. Even more than that, it was the proud feeling which he shared with Cæsar that he would rather be the first man in a country town than the second in Rome.

Indeed, no matter how exalted a rank the king might

confer upon him, even though it be that of Constable of France, that king would still be above him, casting a shadow upon his brow. Mounting with the aid of a king, he would never be more than an upstart; mounting by his own unaided efforts, he would be no upstart—he would stand upon his own feet.

Under the Republic, on the contrary, he was already head and shoulders above the other men, and he could but continue to grow taller and taller. Perhaps his glance, piercing though it was, had not yet extended to the vast horizon which the Empire revealed to him; but there was in a republic an audacity of action and a breadth of enterprise which suited the audacity of his genius and the breadth of his ambition.

As sometimes happens with men who are destined to greatness, and who perform impossible deeds—not because they are predestined to them, but because some one had prophesied that they would do them, and they thereafter regard themselves as favorites of Providence—the most insignificant facts, when presented in certain lights, often led to momentous resolves with Bonaparte. The duel which he had just witnessed, and the soldiers' quarrel respecting the words monsieur and citizen, had brought before him the whole question that was then agitating France. Faraud, in naming his general, Augereau, as an inflexible exponent of democracy, had indicated to Bonaparte the agent he was seeking to second him in his secret plans.

More than once Bonaparte had reflected upon the danger of a Parisian revolt which would either overthrow the Directory, or oppress it as the Convention had been oppressed, and which would lead to a counter-revolution, or, in other words, the victory of the royalists, and to the accession of some prince of the house of Bourbon. In that case Bonaparte had fully determined to cross the Alps with twenty-five thousand men, and march upon Paris by way of Lyons. Carnot, with his sharp nose, had no doubt scented his design, for he sent him the following letter:

People ascribe to you a thousand projects, each one more absurd than the other. They cannot believe that a man who has achieved so much can be content to remain a simple citizen.

The Directory also wrote him:

We have noticed, citizen-general, with the utmost satisfaction, the proofs of attachment which you are constantly giving to the cause of liberty and the Constitution of the Year III. You can count upon the most complete reciprocity on our part. We accept with pleasure all the offers that you have made to come at the first appeal to the succor of the Republic. They are only another proof of your sincere love for your country. You may rest assured that we shall make use of them only to the interests of its tranquillity, its happiness, and its glory.

This letter was in the handwriting of La Reveilliere-Lepaux, and was signed by Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveilliere. The other two, Carnot and Barthelemy, either knew nothing about it, or refused to sign it.

But as chance would have it, Bonaparte was better informed concerning the situation of the directors than were the directors themselves. A certain Comte Delaunay d'Entraigues—a royalist agent well-known in the Revolution—happened to be in Venice when the city was besieged by the French. He was considered the moving factor in all the machinations which were on foot against France, and particularly against the Army of Italy. He was a man of sure judgment. He realized the peril of the Republic of Venice and tried to escape; but the French troops occupied the mainland, and he and his papers were taken. When he was brought before Bonaparte as an emigré, the latter treated him with all the consideration which he habitually showed toward them. He had all his papers returned to him except three, and, upon his giving his parole, the general gave him the entire city of Milan for a prison.

One fine morning it was learned that the Comte Delaunay d'Entraigues, abusing the confidence which the general

had reposed in him, had left Milan and escaped to Switzerland.

But one of the three papers left in Bonaparte's hands, was, under the circumstances, of the greatest importance. It was an exact recital of what had taken place between Fauche-Borel and Pichegru at their first interview at Dawendorff, which has been described in a previous volume, when Fauche-Borel presented himself to Pichegru under the name and garb of citizen Fenouillot, commercial dealer in the wines of Champagne.

The famous Comte de Montgaillard, of whom we have, I think, already said a few words, was intrusted with further communications from the Prince de Condé to Pichegru; and this paper, written by the Comte Delaunay d'Entraigues at the dictation of the Comte de Montgaillard himself, contained the successive offers which the Prince de Condé had made to the general in command of the Army of the Rhine.

The Prince de Condé, who was vested with all the authority of Louis XVIII., with the exception of the right of bestowing the blue ribbon, had offered Pichegru, if he would give up the town of Huningue and return to France at the head of the Austrians and emigrés, to make him Marshal of France and governor of Alsace. He offered to give him:

First. The red ribbon.

Second. The Château of Chambord, with its park and its twelve cannon taken from the Austrians.

Third. A million in ready money.

Fourth. Two hundred thousand francs' income, of which a hundred thousand, in case he should marry, would revert to his wife, and fifty thousand to each of his children until the family should become extinct.

Fifth. A hotel in Paris.

Sixth. And lastly, the town of Arbois, General Pichegru's native place, should be re-christened Pichegru, and should be exempt from all taxes for twenty-five years.

Pichegru had flatly refused to give up Huningue.

"I will never enter into a conspiracy," he said. "I do not wish to become a third edition of La Fayette and Dumouriez. My resources are as sure as they are great. They have roots, not only in the army but in Paris, in the departments and in the generals who are my colleagues, and who think as I do. I ask nothing for myself. When I have succeeded I shall take my reward. But I am not ambitious. You may make your minds easy on that score at once. But to induce my soldiers to shout 'Long live the King!' they must each have a full glass in their right hand and six livres in the left.

"I will cross the Rhine, and enter France with the white flag; I will march upon Paris; and, for the benefit of his Majesty Louis XVIII., I will overturn whatever government may be there when I arrive.

"But my soldiers must receive their pay every day, at least until we have made our fifth day's march upon French soil.

"They will give me credit for the rest."

The negotiations had fallen through on account of the Prince de Condé's obstinacy in insisting that Pichegru should proclaim the king on the other side of the Rhine, and give up the town of Huningue.

Although he possessed this precious document, Bonaparte had refused to use it. It would have cost him too much to betray a general of Pichegru's renown, whose military talent he admired and who had been his master at Brienne.

But he was reckoning none the less on what Pichegru could accomplish as a member of the Council of the Ancients, when, on that very morning, just as he was about to make a military reconnoissance in the neighborhood of Milan, he had received a letter from his brother Joseph, telling him that not only had Pichegru been elected a member of the Five Hundred, but that by unanimous choice he had been made their president.

He was therefore doubly armed with his former popularity with his soldiers and his new civic power.

Hence Bonaparte's sudden decision to send a messenger to Augereau informing him that he wished to see him.

The duel which he had witnessed and the cause which had led to it had not been without their weight in the scale of his ambition. But the two combatants little dreamed that they had largely contributed toward making Augereau a marshal of France, Murat a prince, and Bonaparte an emperor.

Nor would aught of this have come to pass, had not the 18th Fructidor, like the 13th Vendémiaire, destroyed the hopes of the royalists.

CHAPTER XV

AUGEREAU

ON THE next day, while Bonaparte was dictating his letters to Bourrienne, Marmont, one of his favorite aides-de-camp, who was discreetly looking out of the window, announced that he could distinguish at the end of the avenue the waving plume of Murat and the somewhat massive form of Augereau.

Murat was then, as we have said, a handsome young man of twenty-three or four. He was the son of an inn-keeper of Labastide, near Cahors; and his father being also postmaster, Murat, at an early age, learned how to manage horses, and in time became an excellent horseman. Then through I know not what caprice of his father's (who probably wanted to have a prelate in the family), he had been sent to a seminary, where, if we may judge from the letters which are lying before us, his studies did not extend so far as to give him a proper knowledge of orthography.

Luckily, or unluckily for him, the Revolution opened the doors of the seminaries. Young Joachim took flight and enlisted in the Constitutional Guard of Louis XVI., where he distinguished himself by his extreme opinions, his duels, and his courage.

Dismissed, like Bonaparte, by that same Aubry who in · Five Hundred continued to wage such severe war upon ıtriots, he met Bonaparte, became intimate with him, astened to place himself under his orders on the 13th Vendémiaire, and followed him to Italy as aide-de-camp.

Augereau, whom the reader will remember having met at Strasbourg, where he gave young Eugene de Beauharnais fencing lessons, was seventeen years older than Murat, and had already, when we renew our acquaintance with him, reached his fortieth year. After having stagnated for fifteen years in the lower grades, he had been transferred from the Army of the Rhine to the Army of the Pyrenees, under Dugommier.

It was in that army that he won successively the grades of lieutenant-colonel, colonel, and brigadier-general, in which last capacity he defeated the Spaniards on the banks of the Fluvia in such brilliant fashion that he was at once elevated to the rank of general of division.

We have spoken of the peace with Spain, and have given expression to our opinion upon that peace, which made a neutral sovereign, if not an ally, of one of the nearest relatives of Louis XVI., whose head had just fallen by order of the Convention.

After the peace was signed, Augereau joined the Army of Italy under Schérer, and contributed largely to the victory of Loano. At last Bonaparte appeared, and then began the immortal campaign of '96.

Like all the older generals, Augereau deeply deplored the fact, which fairly aroused his scorn, that a young man of twenty-five should be given command of the most important army of France. But when he had marched under the young general's orders; when he had contributed his share toward the taking of the pass of Millesimo; when, as a result of a manœuvre suggested by his young colleague, he had beaten the Austrians at Dego, and had captured the redoubts of Montellesimo without knowing to what end they had been taken—then he appreciated the power of the genius

which had conceived the clever scheme of separating the Sardinians from the imperial troops, thereby assuring the success of the campaign.

He went directly to Bonaparte, confessed his former predispositions, and apologized manfully, and, like the ambitious man he was, while realizing his lack of training, which must indubitably operate against him, he asked Bonaparte to allow him to share in the rewards which the latter distributed to his young lieutenants.

The fact that Augereau, one of the bravest of the generals of the Army of Italy, had, on the day succeeding this interview, carried the intrenched camp of Ceva, and penetrated into Alba and Casale, made it all the easier for Bonaparte to grant this request. Finally, meeting the enemy at the bridge of Lodi, which bristled with cannon and was defended by a terrible fire, he rushed upon the bridge at the head of his grenadiers, took thousands of prisoners, released Masséna from a difficult position, and took Castiglione, which was one day converted into a duchy for him. At last came the famous day of Arcola, which was to crown for him a campaign which he had made glorious by so many daring exploits. There, as at Lodi, the bridge had to be crossed. Three times he led his soldiers to the middle of the bridge, and three times they were repulsed by a storm of grape-shot and canister. Finally, perceiving that his ensign had fallen, he seized the flag, and with head down, not knowing whether he was followed or not, he crossed the bridge and found himself in the midst of the enemy's artillery and bayonets. But this time his soldiers, who adored him, followed. The guns were captured and turned against the enemy.

The victory, one of the most glorious of the campaign, was so justly recognized as being entirely due to his valor, that the government presented him with the flag which he had used to arouse the ardor of his soldiers.

Like Bonaparte, he also reflected that he owed everything to the Republic, and that the Republic alone could

give him all to which his ambition aspired. Under a king, as he well knew, he would not have risen above the grade of sergeant. The son of a mason and a fruit-seller, a common soldier and a fencing master at the outset of his career, he had become a general of division, and at the first opportunity he might, thanks to his own ccurage, become commander-in-chief; like Bonaparte, although he was not endowed with his genius; like Hoche, although he did not possess his integrity; or like Moreau, although he had not his learning.

He had just given proof of his cupidity, which had injured him somewhat with those pure Republicans who sent their gold epaulets to the Republic to be melted up, and wore woollen ones in their stead, until gold should be plentiful.

He had allowed his soldiers three hours' pillage in the town of Lago, which had risen against him. He did not take active part in the pillage, it is true, but he bought at a ridiculously low figure all the articles of value which his soldiers had brought away. He had with him an army wagon, which was said to contain property worth a million; and "Augereau's wagon" was known throughout the army.

Having been notified by Marmont, Bonaparte was expecting him.

Murat entered first and announced Augereau. Bonaparte thanked Murat with a gesture, and intimated that he and Marmont should leave them alone. Bourrienne also rose to go, but Bonaparte detained him by a movement of the hand; he had no secrets from his secretary.

Augereau entered. Bonaparte held out his hand to him, and motioned to him to sit down. Augereau sat down, put his sword between his legs, his hat on its hilt, his arms on the hat, and asked: "Well, general, what is it?"

"It is," said Bonaparte, "that I want to congratulate you upon the fine spirit of your army corps. I stumbled upon a duel yesterday, when one of your soldiers was fighting a comrade from Moreau's division, because the latter had called him monsieur."

"Ah!" said Augereau. "The fact is that I have some rascals who will not listen to reason on that score. This is not the first duel that has been fought for that very reason. Therefore, before leaving Vicenza this morning, I published an order of the day forbidding any man of my division to make use, either verbally or in writing, of the word monsieur, under penalty of being degraded from his rank, or if he were a common soldier, depriving him of the right to serve in the armies of the Republic."

"Then, having taken this precaution," said Bonaparte, looking fixedly at Augereau, "you do not think, do you, that there will be anything to prevent your leaving your division for a month or two?"

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed Augereau; "and why should I leave my division?"

"Because you have asked my permission to go to Paris on personal matters of business."

"And a little on your affairs, also, eh?" said Augereau.

"I thought," said Bonaparte dryly, "that you knew no distinction in our affairs?"

"No, no," said Augereau, "and you should be pleased that I am modest enough to be satisfied always with second place."

"Have you not the second place in the Army of Italy?" asked Bonaparte.

"To be sure; but I did a little something toward that myself, and circumstances may not always be so favorable."

"You see," said Bonaparte, "that when you are no longer useful in Italy, or when opportunities are few, I find occasion for you to be useful in France."

"Why? Tell me. Are you sending me to the assistance of the Republic?"

"Yes, unfortunately, the Republic is in poor hands just now; but poor as they are, it still lives."

"And the Directory?"

"Is divided," replied Bonaparte. "Carnot and Barthélemy incline toward royalty, and they have with them, it

must be confessed, the majority of the councils. But Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux stand firm for the Republic and the Constitution of the Year III., and they have us behind them."

"I thought," said Augereau, "that they had thrown themselves into Hoche's arms."

"Yes; but it will not do to leave them there. There must be no arms in the country that are longer than ours; and ours must reach beyond the Alps, and if necessary bring about another 13th Vendémiaire at Paris."

"Well, why do you not go yourself?" asked Augereau.

"Because if I went it would be to overthrow the Directory and not to sustain it. And I have not done enough yet to play the part of Cæsar."

"And you send me to play the part of your lieutenant. Well! that satisfies me. What is there to be done?"

"Make an end of the enemies of France, who were only half wiped out on the 13th Vendémiaire. As long as Barras pursues a Republican course, second him to the best of your ability and courage; if he hesitates, resist him; if he betrays, collar him as you would the meanest citizen. If you fail, I shall be in Paris within the week with twenty-five thousand soldiers."

"Well," said Augereau, "I will try not to fail. When shall I start?"

"As soon as I have written the letter which you are to take to Barras." Then, turning to Bourrienne, he said: "Write."

Bourrienne had paper and pen in readiness, and Bonaparte dictated as follows:

CITIZEN-DIRECTOR—I send you Augereau, my right arm. For everybody else he is in Paris on a furlough, having some business to attend to; for you he is the director who keeps pace with us. He brings you his sword, and he is instructed to say to you that, in case of need, you may draw upon the budget in Italy to the extent of one, two, or even three millions.

It is, above all, in civil wars that money becomes the vital nerve.

I hope in the course of a week to hear that the councils are purified, and that the Clichy Club no longer exists.

Health and fraternity, BONAPARTE.

P.S.—What is all this we hear about robberies of diligences along the highroads of the Midi by Chouans, under the name of Companions of Jehu? Put your hand on four or five of the rascals and make an example of them.

Bonaparte, according to his habit, read over the letter, and then signed it with a new pen, which did not make his writing any more legible; then Bourrienne sealed it and gave it to the messenger.

"Tell them to give Augereau twenty-five thousand francs from my cash-box, Bourrienne," said Bonaparte. And to Augereau he added: "When you are out of funds, citizen-general, send to me for more."

CHAPTER XVI

THE CITIZEN-DIRECTORS

IT WAS time for the citizen-general Bonaparte to turn his eyes toward the citizen-directors. There had been an open rupture, as we have said, among the five elect of the Luxembourg. Carnot and Barthélemy had drawn completely apart from their colleagues, Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux.

The result was that the ministry could not continue as it was, some of the ministers being creatures of Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux, while others followed Carnot and Barthélemy.

There were seven ministers: Cochon, Minister of Police; Bénézech, Minister of the Interior; Truguet, Minister of Marine; Charles Delacroix, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ramel, Minister of Finance; Merlin, Minister of Justice, and Pétiet, Minister of War.

Cochon, Pétiet, and Bénézech were tainted with royalism. Truguet was haughty and violent and determined to have his own way. Delacroix was not equal to his post. In the opinion of the majority of the directors—Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux—Merlin and Ramel alone should be retained.

The opposition, on the other hand, demanded the removal of four ministers—Merlin, Ramel, Truguet, and Delacroix.

Barras yielded up Truguet and Delacroix; but he cut off three others who were members of the Five Hundred, and whose loss would greatly trouble the two Chambers. These were, as we have said, Cochon, Pétiet, and Bénézech.

We hope that Madame de Staël's salon has not been forgotten. It was there, it will be remembered, that the future author of "Corinne" formed a coterie of opinion, almost as influential as that of the Luxembourg or the Clichy Club.

Now, Madame de Staël, who had made one minister under the monarchy, was haunted with the desire to make another under the Directory.

The life of her candidate had been an eventful one, interesting because of its many changes. He was forty-three years old, a member of one of the foremost families of France, born lame like *Mephistopheles*, whom he resembled somewhat in face and mind—a resemblance which increased when he found his *Faust*. Destined for the Church because of his infirmity, although the eldest of his family, he had been created Bishop of Autun at the early age of twenty-five. Then came the Revolution. Our bishop adopted all its principles, was elected a member of the Constituent Assembly, suggested the abolition of ecclesiastical tithes, celebrated mass on the Champ de Mars on the day of the Federation, blessed the flags, admitted the new constitution of the clergy, and consecrated bishops who took the oath, which led to his excommunication by Pope Pius VI.

Sent to London by Louis XVI., to assist the French ambassador, Monsieur de Chauvelin, he received an order to withdraw from the cabinet of Saint James in 1794; and at the same time he learned from Paris that he had been accused by Robespierre.

This double proscription proved fortunate for him; he was ruined, and went to America, where he accumulated another fortune in commerce. He returned to Paris some three months before the time of which we are writing.

His name was Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord.

Madame de Staël, a woman of great intellect, had been attracted by the man's charming wit; she knew the depths that lay beneath her new friend's assumed frivolity. She introduced him to Benjamin Constant, who was her *cicisbeo* at the time, and Benjamin put him in communication with Barras.

Barras was enchanted with our prelate. After being presented by Madame de Staël to Benjamin Constant, and by Benjamin Constant in turn to Barras, he induced Barras to present him to Rewbell and La Reveillière-Lepaux. He won them as he won everybody else, and it was agreed that he should be made Minister of Foreign Affairs in Bénézech's stead.

The members of the Directory held a meeting to elect by secret ballot the members of the various ministries who should succeed those who were retiring. Carnot and Barthélemy, not ignorant of the agreement between their three colleagues, imagined that they could successfully oppose them. But they realized their mistake when they perceived that the three were unanimous in their choice of those who were to go, those who were to remain, and those who were to come in.

Cochon, Pétiet, and Bénézech were dismissed; Ramel and Merlin were retained. Monsieur de Talleyrand was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs; Pléville-Lepel, Minister of Marine; François de Neufchâteau went to the Department of the Interior and Lenoir-Laroche to the Police Department.

They also nominated Hoche, Minister of War; but he was only twenty-eight, and the requisite age was thirty.

It was this selection that had disturbed Bonaparte in his headquarters at Milan. The secret session had terminated with a violent altercation between Barras and Carnot. Carnot reproached Barras for his luxurious mode of life and his dissolute habits. Barras accused Carnot of defection to the royalist factions. From accusations they passed to the vilest insults.

"You are only a vile rascal!" Barras said to Carnot. "You have sold the Republic, and now you wish to cut the throats of those who defend it. Wretch, brigand!" he continued, rising and shaking his fist in the other's face; "there is not a citizen who would not be justified in spitting in your face."

"Very good," replied Carnot; "I will answer your insults between now and to-morrow."

The next day passed, but Barras was not visited by Carnot's seconds. The affair had no further consequence.

The appointment of this ministry, in which the two councils had not been consulted, caused a great sensation among the representatives. They resolved at once to organize for a struggle. One of the advantages of counter-revolutions is that they furnish historians with documents which they would not otherwise be able to obtain.

And indeed, when the Bourbons returned in 1814, each one tried to outdo the rest in proving that he had conspired against the Republic or the Empire—that is to say, that he had helped to betray his country.

Their object was to claim the reward of treason; and thus it was that we became acquainted with all the conspiracies which precipitated Louis XVI. from his throne; conspiracies of which the people had but a vague notion under the Republic and the Empire, because proofs were lacking.

But in 1814 these proofs were no longer lacking. Each man presented the proofs of his treason with his right hand and held out the left for reward.

It is therefore to that epoch of moral degradation and self-accusation that we must turn for the official details of those struggles in which the guilty were sometimes looked upon as victims, and the administrators of justice as oppressors. For the rest, the reader must have perceived that in the work we are now offering to the public gaze, we appear rather as a romantic historian than as a historical novelist. We believe that we have sufficiently proven our imagination, to be permitted on this occasion to prove our exactitude, while preserving at the same time the element of poetical fancy which will make the perusal of this work easier and more attractive than that of history despoiled of its embellishments.

We have, therefore, had recourse to one of those counter-revolutionary revelations to determine how far the Directory was threatened, and how urgent was the *coup d'état* which was decided upon.

We have seen how, passing Bonaparte, the three directors had turned to Hoche, and how this movement in favor of the man who had pacified the Vendée had alarmed the commander of the Army of Italy. It was Barras who had turned to Hoche.

Hoche was preparing an expedition to Ireland, and he had resolved to detach twenty-five thousand men from the Army of the Sambre-et-Meuse, and to take them to Brest. These twenty-five thousand men could pause as they crossed France, in the neighborhood of Paris, and in a day's march could be at the disposal of the Directory.

Their approach drove the denizens of the Rue de Clichy to the last extremity. The principle of a national guard had been established by the Constitution. They, knowing that this national guard would contain the same elements as the Sections, hastened to join the organization.

Pichegru was chosen president and selected to draw up a plan. He presented a plan inspired by all the cleverness of which his genius, combined with his hatred, rendered him capable.

Pichegru was equally bitter against the royalists, because they had not chosen to profit by his devotion to the royalist cause, and against the republicans, because they had punished him for his causeless devotion. He had gone so far as to desire a revolution of which he would be the prime organizer and which would benefit him alone. At that time his reputation very justly equalled that of his illustrious rivals, Bonaparte, Moreau, and Hoche.

If he had succeeded, Pichegru would have created himself dictator, and, once dictator, he would have opened the way for the return of the Bourbons, from whom he would perhaps have asked nothing but a pension for his father and brother, and a house with a vast library for himself and Rose. The reader will remember who Rose was. It was she to whom he had sent, out of his savings in the Army of the Rhine, an umbrella which little Charles had carried to her.

The same little Charles, who knew him so well, has since said of him: "An empire would have been too small for his genius; a farm would have been too large for his indolence!"

It would take too long to describe Pichegru's scheme for the organization of the national guard; but, once organized, it would have been entirely in his hands. Led by him, and Bonaparte absent, it might have occasioned the downfall of the directors.

A book published by the Chevalier Delarue, in 1821, takes us with him into the club in the Rue de Clichy. The house where the club met belonged to Gilbert des Molières.

All the counter-revolutionary projects, which prove that the 18th Fructidor was not a simple abuse of power and a brutal caprice, emanated from this house.

The Clichians found themselves at a disadvantage by the passage of Hoche's troops and his alliance with Barras. They immediately assembled at their usual meeting-place, formed groups around Pichegru and inquired as to his means of resistance.

Surprised like Pompey, he had no real means at hand.

His sole resource lay in the passions of the various Sections. They discussed the projects of the Directory, and concluded, from the change in the ministry and the advance of the troops, that the directors were planning a *coup d'état* against the Corps Legislatif.

They proposed the most violent measures. They wanted to suspend the Directory. They wished to bring charges against its individual members. They even went so far as to suggest that they be outlawed.

But they lacked the strength necessary to achieve this result. They had only the twelve hundred grenadiers who composed the guard of the Corps Legislatif—a part of the regiment of dragoons commanded by Colonel Malo. They finally proposed, in their desperation, to send a squad of grenadiers into each district of the capital to rally round them the citizens who had taken up arms on the 13th Vendémiaire.

This time it was the Corps Legislatif, which, unlike the Convention, roused Paris against the government. They talked much without reaching any decision—as is always the case with those who lack strength.

Pichegru, when consulted, declared that he would be unable to maintain any resistance with the slender force at his disposal. The confusion was at its height when a message came from the Directory with information concerning the march of the troops. It said that Hoche's troops, on their way from Namur to Brest to embark for Ireland, would stop at Paris.

Then arose cries and shouts to the effect that the Constitution of the Year III. forbade troops to approach within a radius of thirty-six miles of Paris. The messenger from the Directory intimated that he had a reply to that objection.

"The commissioner in charge was ignorant of this article of the Constitution. His ignorance was the real cause of this infraction of the laws. The Directory furthermore affirmed that the troops had received orders to retrace their steps at once."

They were obliged to content themselves with this explanation in default of others; but it satisfied no one, and the excitement that it had caused spread from the two councils and the Clichy Club throughout Paris, where each citizen prepared himself for events no less exciting than those which had occurred on the 13th Vendémiaire.

CHAPTER XVII

MADEMOISELLE DE SAINTE-AMOUR'S SICK-HEADACHE

THE directors were lodged at the Luxembourg, each according to his tastes and habits rather than his needs.

Barras, the man of action and display, the great lord, the Indian nabob, had taken the whole of the wing which now forms the picture-gallery and its appurtenances. Rewbell and La Reveillière-Lepaux shared the other wing. Carnot had taken the whole ground floor for himself and his brother, and had cut off an immense room for his maps from the rest of the apartment. Barthélemy, who had come last, and who was coldly received by his colleagues because he had shared in the counter-revolution, had contented himself with what was left.

On the evening before the stormy meeting at the Clichy Club had taken place, Barras had returned to his rooms in a bad temper. He had invited no one, intending to pass the evening with Mademoiselle de Sainte-Amour, who had replied to his note, sent two hours earlier, by a charming letter saying that, as ever, she would be delighted to see him.

But when he presented himself at the door at nine o'clock, Suzette answered his ring, coming on tiptoe, and entreating him with hand and voice to be silent, as her mistress had been attacked by one of those violent sick-headaches, for which the faculty had as yet found no rem-

edy, since their cause lay, not in the patient's constitution, but rather in her mind.

The director followed Suzette, walking as cautiously as if he had a bandage over his eyes, and were engaged in a game of blind man's buff. As he passed the door of the boudoir, which was shut, he cast a suspicious glance at it before entering the sleeping apartment, with which we are familiar, and which was lighted only by an alabaster lamp in which perfumed oil was burning, and which was suspended from the ceiling.

There was nothing to be said. Mademoiselle de Sainte-Amour was lying upon her bed of rosewood inlaid with Sèvres porcelain. She was wearing a little lace cap especially reserved for days of great suffering, and spoke in the plaintive voice of one to whom speech is an effort.

"Ah! my dear general!" she said, "how good you are to come; and how I longed to see you."

"Was it not understood that I was to spend the evening with you?" replied Barras.

"Yes, and although I was suffering from this odious headache, I said nothing about it. I wanted so much to see you. When one is suffering, the presence of those one loves is more than ever appreciated."

She languidly withdrew a warm, moist hand from beneath the coverings, and extended it to Barras, who kissed it gallantly, and then seated himself upon the foot of the bed. The pain made the invalid moan.

"Ah!" said Barras, "this is a severe headache, is it not?"

"Yes and no," replied Aurélie; "with a little rest it would pass off. Ah! if I could only sleep!"

The words were accompanied with a sigh that might have made the god of sleep himself envious of the beautiful courtesan.

It is probable that within a week after they were driven from Paradise, Eve played this little comedy of the sick-headache for Adam, which has lasted for six thousand years and which has always been attended with the same

success. Men joke about it; women laugh over it; but whenever it is needed the headache hastens to the aid of whoever summons it, and succeeds in getting rid of all importunates.

Barras sat with the beautiful invalid for ten minutes, until she thought that she could decently shut her eyes, half sadly, half smilingly, and permit her breast to rise and fall with that gentle and regular breathing which indicates that while the soul may still be awake the body has already embarked upon the calm ocean of sleep.

Barras laid the hand which he had been holding gently down upon the lace coverlet, deposited a paternal kiss upon the sleeper's white forehead, and bade Suzette tell her mistress that his manifold occupations would possibly prevent him from returning within the next three or four days. Then he left the room on tiptoe as he had entered it. As he passed the boudoir, he longed to push the door open, for something told him that the cause of the fair Aurélie's headache was concealed there. Suzette followed him to the outer door, which she took the precaution to double-lock after him.

When Barras returned to the Luxembourg, his valet informed him that a lady was awaiting him. Barras asked the usual question: "Young or old?"

"She must be young, sir," replied the valet; "but I have not been able to see her face because of her veil."

"How is she dressed?"

"Like a woman in good society, in black satin. She looks like a widow."

"Did you bring her in?"

"I put her in the pink boudoir. If monseigneur should not care to receive her, nothing is easier than to show her out without passing through the cabinet. Will you receive her here, or will you go to the pink boudoir?"

"I will go there," said Barras.

Then, remembering that he might be about to meet a woman of rank, and that the proprieties must be observed

even in the Luxembourg, he said to the valet: "Announce me."

The valet went first, opened the door of the boudoir, and said: "Citizen-director Barras."

He drew back at once to give place to him whom he had announced. Barras entered with that grand air which he had derived from the aristocratic world to which he belonged, and to which, in spite of three years of Revolution and two of Directory, he still belonged.

In one of the corners of the room a couch had been built into the wall. A lady was standing there, dressed all in black, as the valet had said, and whose bearing indicated to Barras at a glance that she did not belong to the frail sisterhood.

Putting his hat on the table, he walked toward her, saying:

"You wished to see me, madame, and I am here."

The young woman, with a superb gesture, raised her veil, and disclosed a face of remarkable beauty.

Beauty is the most powerful of all fairies and the most potent introducer. Barras paused a moment as if dazzled.

"Ah! madame," he said, "how fortunate I am, for I intended remaining out a portion of the night, and only a fortuitous circumstance brought me back to the Luxembourg, where such good fortune awaits me! Be good enough to sit down, madame, and tell me to what I owe the pleasure of your visit."

And he made a movement to take her hand and to lead her to the couch from which she had risen when he was announced.

But she, keeping her hands beneath the folds of her long veil, replied: "Pardon, sir; I will remain standing, as befits a suppliant."

"A suppliant! You, madame? A lady like you does not beg, she commands, or at least she demands."

"Well, sir, I demand! In the name of the town which gave birth to us both; in the name of my father, who was

your friend; in the name of outraged humanity and in the name of outraged justice, I come to demand vengeance!"

"The word is a hard one to fall from the lips of one so young," said Barras.

"Sir, I am the daughter of the Comte de Fargas, who was assassinated at Avignon by the Republicans, and a sister of the Vicomte de Fargas, who has just been assassinated at Bourg-in-Bresse by the Companions of Jehu."

"Those men again," muttered Barras. "Are you sure, mademoiselle?"

The young girl held out her hand and gave Barras the dagger and the paper.

"What is that?" asked Barras.

"The proof of what I have told you. My brother's body was found three days ago on the Place de la Prefecture, at Bourg, with this dagger in his heart and this paper tied to the hilt of the dagger."

Barras at first examined the weapon with interest. It was forged from a single piece of steel, in the form of a cross, like the ancient daggers of Saint Vehme. The only thing which distinguished it from them was the inscription, "Companions of Jehu," which was engraved upon the blade.

"But," said Barras, "this dagger alone merely raises a presumption. It might have been stolen or forged purposely to lead the officers of justice astray."

"Yes," returned the young girl; "but here is something which should place them on the right track. Read this postscript, written in my brother's own handwriting and signed with his own name."

Barras read:

I die because I have broken a sacred oath; consequently I admit that I deserve death. If you wish to give my body Christian burial, it will be placed to-morrow night in the market-place at Bourg. The dagger which will be found buried in my breast will indicate that I do not die the victim of a cowardly assassination, but of a just vengeance.

VICOMTE DE FARGAS.

"And this postscript was addressed to you, mademoiselle?" asked Barras.

"Yes, sir."

"And you are sure that it is in your brother's writing?"

"It is his writing."

"What does he mean by writing that he 'does not die the victim of a cowardly assassination, but of a just vengeance'?"

"My brother was himself a Companion of Jehu. When arrested he broke his oath and betrayed his comrades." Then she added, with a strange laugh, "I ought to have joined in his stead."

"Wait," said Barras; "there should be a report of this among my papers."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MISSION OF MADEMOISELLE DE FARGAS

BARRAS, leaving Mademoiselle de Fargas alone for a moment, went to his study; and in a receptacle prepared for his private correspondence he found a letter from the prosecutor of the Republic at Avignon, which gave him an account of the whole affair up to the departure of the Vicomte de Fargas for Nantua.

He gave it to Mademoiselle de Fargas to read. She went through it from end to end, and found that it confirmed what she had heard before she left Avignon.

"Then," she said to Barras, "you have received no news for two days?"

"No," replied the latter.

"That does not speak very well for your police; fortunately, in this instance, I can supply their place."

And she told Barras how she had followed her brother to Nantua; how she had arrived there just in time to learn that he had been abducted from the prison; how the registry had been burned, and how the documents relating to

the prosecution had been destroyed; and, finally, how, on awaking the next morning, she had found the body, pierced with a dagger belonging to the Companions of Jehu, on the Place de la Prefecture at Bourg.

Everything which happened in the Midi and the East was so impregnated with mystery that the cleverest agents of the police vainly sought to fathom it. Barras hoped at first that his beautiful visitor could give him information which was not generally known; but her sojourn, both at Nantua and Bourg, while it had brought her in touch with the scene of events and placed their results before her eyes, had taught her nothing new.

All that Barras knew and could tell her was that these events bore a close resemblance to the occurrences in Brittany and the Vendée.

The Directory was perfectly cognizant of the fact that these dread robbers of diligences did not carry on their work for their own benefit, but turned the government money over to Charette, Stofflet, the Abbé Bernier, and Georges Cadoudal.

Charette and Stofflet had been captured and shot, and the Abbé Bernier had submitted. But, breaking his parole, instead of going to England, he had remained concealed in his own country. So that a year and a half after the pacification the Directory had felt sufficiently secure to recall Hoche and send him to the Army of the Sambre-et-Meuse. Then had come the report of a new insurrection; and by repeated blows the Directory had learned that four new leaders had appeared in the country —Prestier, D'Autichamp, Suzannette, and Grognon. As for Cadoudal, he had never parleyed or laid down his arms; he had never ceased endeavoring to prevent Brittany from recognizing the Republican government.

Barras had seemed for a moment to come to a resolution; but, like all chance ideas, which at first seem impossible, it apparently needed time to ripen before leaving the mind which had conceived it. From time to time he glanced

at the proud young girl, then at the dagger, which he still held in his hand, and then at the Vicomte de Fargas's farewell letter, which he had laid upon the table. Diane grew weary of the silence.

"I have demanded vengeance at your hands," she said, "and you have not answered me."

"What do you mean by vengeance?" asked Barras.

"I mean the death of those who killed my brother."

"Tell me their names," returned Barras; "we are as desirous as you are that they should expiate their crimes. Once captured, their punishment will not be slow to follow."

"If I knew their names," replied Diane, "I should not have come to you; I should have used this dagger on them myself."

Barras looked at her.

The calm voice with which she had uttered these words was abundant proof that her ignorance had alone deterred her from taking the law into her own hands.

"Well," said Barras, "you can search for them and we will do the same."

"I search?" resumed Diane. "Is that my business? Am I the government? Am I the police? Is it my duty to provide for the safety of citizens? They arrested my brother and put him in prison. The prison which belongs to the government must answer to me for my brother. The prison opens and betrays its prisoner; the government must answer to me for that. Therefore, since you are the head of the government, I come to you and say: 'My brother! my brother! my brother!' "

"Mademoiselle," replied Barras, "we live in troublous times, when even the keenest eye can scarcely see, when the stoutest heart hesitates, though it does not weaken, when the strongest arm bends and falters. In the East and the Midi we have the Companions who assassinate, in the West we have the Vendéans and the Bretons who fight. We have three-quarters of Paris conspiring, two-thirds of

our chambers in opposition to us, and two of our colleagues betraying us. In the midst of this universal strife you ask that the great machine, which, in watching over its own safety, protects the saving principles which will transform Europe, to close all its eyes and concentrate them upon one point—the Place de la Prefecture where you found the lifeless body of your brother. It is too much to ask of us, mademoiselle; we are simply mortal, and you must not expect us to accomplish the work of gods. You loved your brother?"

"I adored him."

"You wish to avenge him?"

"I would give my life for that of his murderer."

"And if you were shown a means of discovering that murderer, whatever the means, would you adopt it?"

Diane hesitated a moment. Then she said vehemently: "Whatever it might be I would adopt it."

"Well, listen to me," said Barras. "Help us and we will help you."

"What am I to do?"

"You are young and beautiful—very beautiful."

"That is not the point," said Diane, without lowering her eyes.

"On the contrary," said Barras, "it is right to the point. In this great struggle which we call life, woman has been given her beauty, not as a simple gift from Heaven to rejoice the eyes of her lover and her husband, but as a means of attack and defence. The Companions of Jehu have no secret from Cadoudal. He is their real head, since they are working for him. He knows all their names from first to last."

"Well," said Diane, "what then?"

"Why," said Barras, "it is very simple. Go to the Vendée or Brittany and join Cadoudal. Wherever he may be, present yourself to him as a victim of your devotion to the royalist cause, which you really are. Cadoudal cannot see you without falling in love with you. With his love

he will give you his confidence. Resolute as you are, and with your brother's memory in your heart, you need grant nothing save what it pleases you to grant. Then you will discover the names of these men for whom we are searching in vain. Tell us the names—that is all we ask of you—and your vengeance shall be satisfied. Now, if your influence over the fanatic should go far enough to induce him to submit to the government, I need hardly tell you that the government would put no bounds—"

Diane extended her hand.

"Take care, sir," she said, "one word more and you will insult me. I ask twenty-four hours for reflection."

"Take as much time as you wish," said Barras, "you will always find me at your service."

"To-morrow, here, at nine o'clock in the evening," replied Diane.

And taking her dagger from Barras's hand, and her brother's letter from the table, she placed them both in her breast, bowed to Barras, and left the room.

The next day, at the same hour, Mademoiselle Diane de Fargas was again announced to the director. Barras passed quickly into the pink boudoir and found her awaiting him.

"Well, my beautiful Nemesis?" he asked.

"I have decided," she replied; "but you understand I need a safe-conduct which will be recognized by the Republican authorities. In the life I am about to take up, it is possible that I may be taken with arms in my hands making war upon the Republic. You shoot women and children; it is a war of extermination. But that is a matter between God and yourselves. I may be taken, but I do not want to be shot before my vengeance is accomplished."

"I have foreseen your request, mademoiselle, and have prepared not only a passport, which will assure you full liberty of movement, but a safe-conduct, which, in extreme need, would force your enemies to become your defenders. I advise you, however, to conceal them both, particularly the latter, from the eyes of the Vendéans and the Chouans.

A week ago, wearied of seeing this hydra of civil war springing up continually with new heads, we sent an order to General Hedouville to give no quarter. Consequently, as in the glorious prime of the Republic, when the Convention gained victories by decrees, we have sent down one of the old "drowning-agents" of the Loire, a man who knows the country, named François Goulin, with a new guillotine. The guillotine will be for the Chouans if they are taken, or for the generals of our armies if they allow themselves to be beaten. Citizen Goulin is taking General Hedouville a reinforcement of six thousand men. The Vendéans and the Bretons have no fear of musketry; they march up to it crying, 'Long live the king! long live religion!' and singing hymns. We will see how they meet the guillotine! You will meet, or, rather, you will overtake, these six thousand men who are marching with citizen Goulin from Angers to Rennes. If you are at all afraid, put yourself under their protection until you reach the Vendée, and learn definitely where Cadoudal is, when you will join him."

"Very well, sir," said Diane, "I thank you."

"When will you start?" asked Barras.

"My carriage and my post-horses are waiting at the door of the Luxembourg."

"Permit me to ask you a delicate question, but one which it is my duty to ask you."

"What is it, sir?"

"Do you need any money?"

"I have six thousand francs in gold in my strong-box, and twenty thousand more in paper money. You see that I can make war on my own account."

Barras held out his hand to Mademoiselle de Fargas, who pretended not to notice this act of courtesy.

She made an irreproachable courtesy and retired.

"There is a charming viper," said Barras; "but I should not like to be the one to warm it!"

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRAVELLERS

AS Mademoiselle de Fargas had told Barras, a carriage was waiting for her at the door of the Luxembourg. She entered it, saying to the postilion: "The road to Orléans."

The postilion gathered up the reins, the little bells tinkled, and the carriage sped down the road toward the barrier of Fontainebleau.

As Paris was threatened with disturbances in the near future, all the barriers were carefully guarded, and the gendarmes were ordered to examine carefully any one entering or leaving the city.

Whoever failed to have upon his passport either the signature of the new minister of police, Sothin, or the guarantee of one of the three directors, Barras, Rewbell, or La Reveillière, was obliged to explain at length his reason for entering or leaving Paris.

Mademoiselle de Fargas was stopped at the barrier like every one else; she was forced to descend from her carriage and enter the office of the police commissioner, who, without noticing that she was young and beautiful, asked for her passport with the same unbending dignity as though she had been old and ugly. Mademoiselle de Fargas took the requisite paper from her satchel and handed it to the official. He read it aloud:

Citizeness Marie Rotrou, post-mistress at Vitré (Ille-et-Vilaine). (Signed) BARRAS.

The passport was in proper form; the commissioner returned it to her with a bow that was intended for the signature of Barras rather than the humble post-mistress. The latter bowed slightly, and retired without noticing a handsome young man of twenty-six who was about to present

his passport when she entered, and had drawn back his outstretched arm, with a courtesy which denoted his gentle birth, to allow the beautiful traveller to pass first.

But he followed her immediately. The magistrate took the passport with the customary gravity which characterized the performance of his important duties, and read:

Citizen Sebastien Argentan, tax-collector at Dinan (Côtes-du-Nord).

The passport was signed not only by Barras, but by his two colleagues, and there was therefore even less to criticise about it than there had been about that of Mademoiselle Rotrou's, which was signed by Barras alone.

Receiving his passport, together with a gracious bow from the official, M. Sebastien Argentan mounted a post-horse and trotted slowly away, while the postilion, whose duty it was to precede him and see that his relays were duly ordered, set off at a gallop. All night long the tax-collector rode beside a closed post-chaise, in which he was far from suspecting slept the beautiful girl to whom he had yielded his place.

Day came, and one of the windows was opened to admit the fresh morning air; a pretty head, which had not yet shaken off all traces of sleep, looked out to see the state of the weather, and to his great astonishment he recognized the post-mistress of Vitré travelling by post in a handsome carriage. But he remembered that her passport was signed by Barras, which would explain much in the way of luxury, particularly where a woman was in question.

The tax-gatherer bowed politely to the post-mistress, who, remembering that she had seen him on the previous evening, returned his greeting graciously.

Although he thought the young woman charming, he was too well-bred to approach the carriage, or to speak to her. He urged his horse to a gallop, and, as if the mutual salutation had satisfied his ambition, he disappeared around the first turn of the road.

But he had guessed that his travelling companion, whose destination he knew (having heard her passport read), would breakfast at Etampes. He therefore stopped there himself, arriving half an hour before her.

He ordered the ordinary inn breakfast, to be served in the common dining-room; namely, two chops, half a cold chicken, a little ham, some fruit, and a cup of coffee.

Scarcely had he attacked the chops when the travelling-carriage of Mademoiselle de Fargas drew up before the inn, which was also a post-house. The traveller asked for a private room, crossed the common hall, bowed to her former acquaintance, who had risen on perceiving her, and went upstairs. The question which agitated Monsieur d'Argentan, who wished to make his journey as pleasant as possible, was whether Mademoiselle Rotrou was to eat in her own room or in the public dining-room.

A moment later the question was answered. The maid who had accompanied the traveller upstairs, came down and laid a white cloth on a table, and set a cover thereon. Eggs, fruit, and a cup of chocolate formed the frugal repast of the young woman, who came down just as M. d'Argentan was finishing his breakfast.

The young man noted with pleasure, that while her toilet was simple, it was arranged with sufficient care to indicate that coquetry was not entirely extinct in the heart of the pretty post-mistress. He probably thought that he could overtake her by hard riding, for he, in his turn, declared that he was in need of rest, and desired to be shown to a room. He threw himself on a bed and slept two hours.

In the meantime, Mademoiselle Rotrou, who had slept the whole night, got into her carriage again and resumed her journey. About five o'clock she perceived before her the church steeple of Orleans, and at the same time she heard behind her the gallop of a horse, which, together with the sound of bells, told her that the traveller had overtaken her. The two young people were now acquaintances. They bowed politely, and M. d'Argentan thought

that he now had the right to approach the carriage door and ask after the health of the fair occupant. It was easy to see, in spite of the pallor of her complexion, that she was not over-fatigued. He congratulated her politely upon the fact, and confessed that his own manner of travelling, however easy the horse's gait, would not permit him to make the entire journey without a break. He added that if he could only find an opportunity to purchase a carriage, he might continue his journey in that agreeable fashion. This was asking Mademoiselle Rotrou in a roundabout way if she would consent to share her carriage and the expense of it with him.

Mademoiselle Rotrou ignored his hint, and spoke of the weather, which was fine, and of the probability that she herself would be obliged to break her journey for a day or two, either at Tours or at Angers; to which the traveller on horseback made no reply whatever, secretly resolving to stop wherever she did.

It would have been discourteous to remain longer beside the carriage after this overture and its rejection. Monsieur d'Argentan therefore set off at a gallop, telling Mademoiselle Rotrou that he would order her relay at Orléans.

Any other than the proud Diane de Fargas, any one whose heart was not incased in steel, would have noticed the refinement, the courtesy and the beauty of the traveller. But whether she was destined to remain forever indifferent, or whether her heart needed to be more violently appealed to, certain it is that none of all that which would have caught another woman's eye attracted her glance.

Entirely absorbed in her hatred, and wholly unable to dismiss the object of her journey from her mind, even while she smiled she pressed the dagger to her side, as if remorseful for that smile; that dagger which, as we said, opened the way for her brother's soul to precede hers to heaven.

Looking along the road, to see if she were indeed alone, and discerning no one as far as eye could reach, she drew from her pocket the last note her brother had written her,

and read and reread it, as one will impatiently and yet persistently taste of a bitter root. Then she fell back in a doze, and remained thus until the carriage stopped for fresh horses.

She looked about her. The horses were ready, as Monsieur d'Argentan had promised her they would be; but when she inquired after him, she was told that he had gone on ahead.

They stopped five minutes to change horses, then they took the road to Blois.

At the first turn, the young lady saw her handsome courier, riding slowly, as if waiting for her; but this indiscretion, if indiscretion it were, was so inexcusable that it was excused.

Mademoiselle Rotrou soon overtook the rider. It was she this time who spoke first, to thank him for the courtesy he had shown her.

"For my part," replied the young man, "I thank my lucky star for leading me by the same route as yourself to the police commissioner, and there permitting me to yield you my place, and thereby to learn from your passport where you were going. As chance wills it, my road is the same as yours; for while you are going to Vitré, I am going some twenty miles beyond, to Dinan. If you are not to remain in the neighborhood, at least I shall have had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of a charming person, and of accompanying her at least nine-tenths of the way. On the other hand, if you do remain, as my business requires me to travel to and fro through the departments of the Manche, Nord, and Ille-et-Vilaine, I shall ask permission, when chance recalls me to Vitré, to bring myself to mind, unless that reminder be disageeable to you."

"I do not know myself how long I shall remain at Vitré," she replied, graciously rather than curtly. "In reward for services rendered by my father, I have been appointed, as you see, post-mistress at Vitré. But I do

not think that I shall fill the position myself. I was ruined by the Revolution, and I shall be obliged in some way to take advantage of the favor which the government has bestowed upon me. I think I shall either sell or rent the position, and thus draw an income from it without being obliged to exert myself personally.''

D'Argentan bowed low over his horse, as if this confidence were sufficient for him and he were grateful for it to one who was, after all, under no obligation to bestow it.

It afforded an opening for all those topics of conversation on neutral ground which verge upon the private territory of the heart, but do not form a part of it.

Of what better topic could they converse, going, the one to Vitré, the other to Dinan, than of the Chouans, who were desolating the three or four departments which formed the old province of Brittany?

Mademoiselle Rotrou expressed great fear of falling into the hands of men who were called ''brigands.'' But instead of sharing this fear or adding to it, M. d'Argentan declared that he should be the happiest man in the world if such a thing should befall his companion, for he had been a fellow-student with Cadoudal at Rennes, and this would give him an opportunity of finding out whether the famous leader of the Chouans was as stanch in his friendships as he was credited with being.

Mademoiselle Rotrou grew dreamy, and allowed the conversation to drop; then, after a pause, she uttered a weary sigh, and said: ''I am indeed more fatigued than I thought. I believe I shall stop at Angers, if only for the night.''

CHAPTER XX

"THE BEST OF FRIENDS MUST PART"

MONSIEUR D'ARGENTAN felt a two-fold satisfaction when he heard that Mademoiselle Rotrou intended to stop at Angers. A man had to be as finished a rider as was Monsieur d'Argentan to take a ride like that which he had just taken, from Paris to Angers—even supposing that he had not come a greater distance than Paris—without a halt. He therefore resolved to stop at Angers also, both to seek the needed rest and to improve his acquaintance with his new friend.

Monsieur d'Argentan, notwithstanding the fact that his passport indicated a provincial residence, was so perfect a specimen of refinement that the Parisian stood revealed in him, and not only of Paris, but of the aristocratic quarters of Paris.

His astonishment, therefore, had been great, although he had not betrayed it, when, after exchanging a few words with so beautiful a creature, who was travelling alone under a passport signed by Barras (which was in itself a significant fact), he found that the conversation did not bring them into more intimate relations, and that the acquaintance went no further.

When he left the police commissioner's office and had ridden on ahead, knowing that he was going in the same direction as the traveller whose passport he had heard read aloud, though he did not know how she was travelling, he had promised himself that he would make the journey in her company. But when in the morning he had been overtaken by a luxurious travelling-carriage, and found that it contained the nest of the charming bird of passage whom

he had left behind, he had repeated the promise to himself, doubly resolved to keep it.

But, as we have seen, Mademoiselle de Fargas, while responding civilly to his advances, had not permitted him to put the toe of his boot upon the step of the carriage into which he had had the idea of introducing his whole body.

Angers and a night's rest, therefore, came in very comfortably to remove a little of his fatigue, and to permit him, if it were possible, to advance a step further in the intimacy of this unapproachable post-mistress, before the journey should end.

They reached Angers about five o'clock in the evening. About three miles out from the town, the rider approached the carriage, and, bowing to his saddle-bow, he said: "Would it be indiscreet to ask if you are hungry?"

Diane, who divined her travelling-companion's aim, made a motion of the lips which resembled a smile.

"Yes, sir, it would be indiscreet," she replied.

"Indeed, and why?"

"I will tell you. Because I should no sooner have told you that I was hungry than you would have asked permission to go and order my dinner. No sooner would I have given you permission to do so than you would have requested to have it served at the same table with yours. In other words, you would have invited me to take dinner with you, which, as you see, would be an indiscretion."

"Really, mademoiselle," said d'Argentan, "your logic is terrible, and, if I may say so, bears little resemblance to the period in which we live."

"That," retorted Diane with a frown, "is because few women find themselves in the same position as I am in. You see, sir, that I am in deep mourning."

"Are you in mourning for a husband? Your passport describes you as unmarried and not as a widow."

"I am unmarried, and a young girl, sir, if one can remain so after five years of solitude and misfortune. My last relative, he who was everything in the world to me, has just

died. Reassure yourself, sir, you have not, in leaving Paris, lost your seductive powers, but I cannot consistently consent to recognize the merits of those who address me, and who see that in spite of my mourning I am young, and that in spite of my grief I am fair. And now I am as hungry as one can be who drinks tears, and who lives on memories instead of hopes. I will dine as usual in the same room with you, assuring you that under any other circumstances, were it only out of gratitude to you for your attentions during the journey, I would have dined at the same table with you."

The young man rode up as close to her as the rapid motion of the carriage would permit.

"Madame," said he, "after your frank avowal, it remains for me to assure you that if, in your unprotected state, you should need a friend, you have one at hand, and though it be only a friend of the highroad, he is as true as any you will find."

Then setting off at a gallop, he went, as he had suggested, to order dinner for two.

But as the hour of Mademoiselle Rotrou's arrival coincided with that of the table d'hôte, Monsieur d'Argentan had the delicacy to say that his companion would dine in her own room, even at the risk of not seeing her again. At the table nothing was talked of except the six thousand men whom the Directory had sent to bring Cadoudal to terms.

During the last two weeks Cadoudal had struck blows more audacious than any that had been attempted by the most adventurous generals who had served in the Vendée and Brittany during the bloodiest times of the war in those provinces.

Monsieur d'Argentan, the tax-collector of Dinan, inquired persistently as to the route which the little corps had taken. He was informed that there was the utmost uncertainty concerning that point, because the man in command, who, though not wearing the uniform, seemed abso-

lute with them, had said at that very inn that his route would depend upon certain information which he was to receive at the little village of Châteaubriant, and that it would also depend upon the whereabout of his adversary whether he plunged into the Morbihan or skirted the hills of Maine.

When he had finished dinner, Monsieur d'Argentan sent a message to Mademoiselle Rotrou, asking whether she would do him the honor to receive him, as he had a communication to make which he believed to be of much importance.

She replied that she would do so with pleasure.

Five minutes later he entered her room, where she received him, sitting at an open window. Mademoiselle Rotrou pointed to an arm-chair, and motioned to him to be seated. He thanked her with a slight bow, and contented himself with leaning on the back of the chair.

"As you might think, mademoiselle," said he, "that regret at parting so soon from you has led me to seek a pretext for seeing you again, I will come straight to the point. I do not know whether or not you are desirous of meeting, at some three hundred miles from Paris, those extra-judicial agents of the government, who become more tyrannical the further they get from the centre of power. What I do know is that we are on the eve of meeting a considerable Republican column led by one of those wretches whose business it is to lock for heads for the government. It seems that shooting has been adjudged too noble a death for the Chouans, and the guillotine is to be naturalized on the soil of Brittany. The troops will have to choose between two roads at Châteaubriant, a village some fifteen miles from here, and will either march straight to the sea, or skirt the Côtes-du-Nord and the Morbihan. Have you any reason to fear them? If so, whichever road you take —and even if you have to pass the entire column from beginning to end—I will remain with you. If, on the contrary, you have nothing to fear from them (and I hope you will not mistake the motive which prompts the question), as I have myself only a moderate liking for tri-colored

cockades, envoys extraordinary, and the guillotine—you see how frank I am—I will avoid the column and will take the road to Dinan, which does not suggest itself to their fancy."

"First, let me thank you with all my heart, sir," said Mademoiselle Rotrou, "and assure you of my gratitude, but I am not going as you are to Dinan, but to Vitré. If the column has taken the road to Rennes, which is that of Dinan, I shall have no fear of meeting it. If, on the contrary, it has taken that of Vitré, it will not deter me from following it also. I have not much more liking than you for tri-colored cockades, envoys extraordinary, and guillotines; but I have no reason to fear them. I will even go further. I was informed of these men and of what they carry with them; and as they are to cross that part of Brittany which was occupied by Cadoudal, I was authorized, in case of necessity, to put myself under their protection. All will therefore depend upon their leader's decision. If they continue on the road to Vitré, I shall regret being obliged to part from you at the crossroad. If, on the contrary, they take the road to Rennes, and your dislike is so great as to cause you to avoid them, I shall owe to that dislike the pleasure of continuing my journey with you until I have reached my destination."

Monsieur d'Argentan's explanation when he entered forbade his lingering, now that his errand had been discharged. He bowed and went out, while Mademoiselle Rotrou rose from her chair.

At six o'clock they started, therefore, after the customary greetings. At Châteaubriant they learned that the column had left an hour earlier by the road to Vitré. Consequently the two travellers were obliged to separate. Monsieur d'Argentan approached Mademoiselle Rotrou, renewed his offer of service, and said farewell in a voice full of emotion. Mademoiselle Rotrou raised her eyes toward the young man, and being too much a woman of the world herself not to be grateful for the respect which he had shown her, she gave him her hand to kiss.

Monsieur d'Argentan mounted his horse, and called out to the postilion who preceded him, "Road to Rennes!" while Mademoiselle Rotrou's carriage, obedient to the order which she gave in a voice as calm as usual, took the road to Vitré.

CHAPTER XXI

CITIZEN FRANÇOIS GOULIN

MADEMOISELLE ROTROU, or rather, Diane de Fargas, fell into a profound revery after leaving Châteaubriant. In the state of her heart at that time, it was, or so she thought, insensible to all tender sentiments, particularly love. But beauty, refinement, and courtesy will always exercise upon a woman of breeding a sufficient influence to make her dream if not love.

Mademoiselle de Fargas, therefore, dreamed of her fellow-traveller, and for the first time a suspicion occurred to her. She began to ask herself how it was that a man so amply protected by the triple signature of Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux should evince such an unconquerable repugnance toward the agent of a government which had honored him with such noteworthy confidence.

She forgot that she herself, whose sympathies were far from being with the Revolutionary government, was travelling under the same protection; and even supposing Monsieur d'Argentan to be an aristocrat, which she surmised to be the case from some words he let fall during their last interview, it was possible that, under the stress of circumstances like hers, he had availed himself of a protection which he was somewhat ashamed to claim.

Then, too, she noticed that Monsieur d'Argentan, when he dismounted from his horse, always removed a valise from the saddle whose weight seemed somewhat disproportionate to its size.

Although the young man was strong and vigorous, as if

to divert suspicion he often carried it with one hand, as he would a valise containing a mere change of clothing. But it taxed his strength far more than he was willing to have it appear.

Was he carrying money? If so, he was a curious kind of tax-gatherer, to be carrying money from Paris to Vitré, instead of sending it from Vitré to Paris.

While the constant revolution of the wheel of Fortune made it difficult to determine such matters accurately, Mademoiselle de Fargas was too familiar with the different rounds of the social ladder not to know that it was unusual to find an insignificant tax-collector of an obscure canton at the furthest extremity of France, who rode like an English gentleman and expressed himself with the courtesy which had about it the indelible perfume of gentle birth. And this was especially noticeable toward the close of a period when everybody had put on a varnish of vulgarity to please the powers that were.

She asked herself—without a flutter of the heart, however—who the unknown could be, and what motive had induced him to travel with a passport that was certainly not his own.

By a curious coincidence, when Monsieur d'Argentan left Diane de Fargas he asked himself the same questions about her.

Suddenly, just as they reached the summit of the hill which guarded the entrance of the post-town of La Guerche, from which the road was visible for miles around, Diane was startled and dazzled by the gleam of gun-barrels, reflecting the light of the sun. The road looked like an immense river of flashing steel. It was the Republican column, whose advance guard had already reached La Guerche, while the rest of the troops were still a mile and a half behind them.

Everything was of importance in these troublous times, and, as Diane paid her attendants well, the postilion asked her whether he should take his place in the rear of the col-

umn, or drive along the side of the road without slackening his pace, and thus reach La Guerche.

Mademoiselle de Fargas told him to raise the top of the carriage, that she might not be made the object of undue curiosity, and to drive on without slackening his speed. The postilion did as she bid him; and then, remounting his horse, set off at the smart pace at which the horses of the Department of Posts used to make their six miles an hour. As a result, Mademoiselle de Fargas duly reached the gates of La Guerche. When we say gates, we mean the beginning of the street which branched into the Châteaubriant road.

There they found an obstruction, in the nature of an immense machine, drawn by twelve horses, on a truck which was too wide to pass the gates, and which blocked the entire road.

Mademoiselle de Fargas, seeing that her carriage had stopped, and not knowing the reason, put her head through the open window, and said: "What is the matter, postilion?"

"The matter is, citizeness," replied the postilion, "that our streets are not wide enough for the things they wish to carry through them, and they will have to dig up one of the posts before M. Guillotin's machine can enter La Guerche."

And, in fact, as François Goulin had decided to travel for the edification of towns and villages, it happened, as the postilion had said, that the street was too narrow, not for the machine itself, but for the sort of rolling platform on which it was set up.

Diane gazed at the horrible thing that obstructed the road; then, realizing that this must be the scaffold, which she had never seen before, she quickly turned her head away, exclaiming: "Oh! how horrible!"

"How horrible! how horrible!" repeated a voice in the crowd. "I should like to know who is the aristocrat who speaks thus disrespectfully of the instrument which has

done more for human civilization than any invention since that of the plow?"

"It is I, sir," said Mademoiselle de Fargas; "and if you have anything to do with it, I should be much obliged if you would aid my carriage to enter La Guerche as soon as possible. I am in haste."

"Ah! you are in haste," said a thin, dried-up little man, dressed in the ignoble *carmagnole* or jacket which had not been worn for the last two years or so. He was white with rage. "Ah! you are in haste! Well, you will have to get out of your carriage, and you will have to go on foot—if so be that we let you go at all."

"Postilion!" said Diane, "lower the top of the carriage."

The postilion obeyed. The young girl threw aside her veil, disclosing her marvellous face.

"Can it be, perchance, that I am talking to citizen François Goulin?" asked she mockingly.

"I believe you are mocking me," said the little man, darting toward the carriage, and arranging the red cap, now out of fashion for some time, but which citizen François Goulin had determined to bring into fashion again in the provinces. "Well, yes, it is I. What have you to say to me?"

And he stretched out his hand toward her as if he would take her by the throat. Diane sprang to the other side of the carriage.

"In the first place," said she, "if you must touch me, which I do not think at all necessary, put on gloves. I detest dirty hands."

Citizen Goulin summoned four men, presumably to order them to seize the beautiful traveller; but from a secret pocket in her satchel Diane had drawn out the safe-conduct which Barras had given her.

"I beg your pardon, citizen," she said, still mocking him, "but do you know how to read?"

Goulin gave a cry of rage.

"You do?" said she. "Then read this; but take care

not to crumple the paper too much, for it may be useful to me again if I am to meet many more such boors as you."

And she held out the paper to him. It contained only a few words:

In the name of the Directory, the civil and military authorities are ordered to protect Mademoiselle Rotrou in her mission, and to afford her armed assistance, if she claims it, under penalty of dismissal.

Paris, the —— BARRAS.

Citizen François Goulin read and re-read the safe-conduct of Mademoiselle de Fargas. Then, like a bear who is forced by his master, whip in hand, to make his bow, he said:

"These are singular times when women, and women too in silk dresses and carriages, are permitted to give orders to citizens who bear the outward and visible signs of Republicanism and equality. Since we have only changed our king, and you have a passport from King Barras, you may go, citizeness; but you may rest assured that I shall never forget your name, and if ever you fall into my hands—"

"Postilion, see if the road is clear," said Mademoiselle de Fargas in her usual tones. "I have no further business with monsieur."

The road was not yet clear, but by turning aside the carriage managed to pass.

Mademoiselle de Fargas reached the post-house with great difficulty, for the road was crowded with Republicans. There she was obliged to stop. She had eaten nothing since she had left Châteaubriant, and as she wished to sleep at Vitré, it was imperative that she should take some nourishment at La Guerche. She asked for a room, and ordered something to be served in it. Scarcely had she begun her breakfast, however, than she was informed that the colonel commanding the column wished to pay his respects to her.

She replied that she had not the honor of the colonel's acquaintance, and that unless he had something of importance to say to her she begged him to excuse her.

The colonel insisted, saying that he thought it his duty to warn her of something which he alone knew, and which might prove of the utmost importance to her.

Mademoiselle de Fargas intimated that she would receive him, and Colonel Hulot was announced.

CHAPTER XXII

COLONEL HULOT

COLONEL HULOT was a man of thirty-eight or forty. He had served for ten years under the late king without having been able to rise to the rank of corporal. But as soon as the Revolution had been proclaimed, he had earned one grade after another at the point of his sword, like the brave soldier that he was.

He had learned of the altercation which had taken place at the gate between citizen François Goulin and the pretended Mademoiselle Rotrou.

"Citizeness," he said as he entered, "I have heard of what took place between yourself and the commissioner of the Directory. I need hardly tell you that we old soldiers have no great affection for these fellows who follow the armies with the guillotine as if powder and ball and swords did not give death sufficient pasture to reap in. Hearing that you had stopped at the post-house, I came to you with the sole intention of congratulating you upon the manner in which you had treated citizen Goulin. When men tremble before such wretches it behooves women to prove to them that they are but the fag-ends of the human race, and that they are not worthy to be called rabble by a beautiful mouth like yours. And now, citizeness, have you need of Colonel Hulot? If so, command him."

"Thanks, colonel," said Diane; "if I had anything to fear or to ask I would accept your offer with a frankness equal to that with which you make it. I am going to Vitré,

which is the end of my journey, and, as there is but one more stage to make, I think that I am not liable to meet with any inconveniences greater than those which have already befallen me heretofore."

"Hum!" said Colonel Hulot. "I know that Vitré is but some fifteen miles distant, but I also know that the road forms a narrow pass, bordered by furze and thorn brush, most admirably suited to serve as an ambush for my gentlemen, the Chouans. My own opinion is that in spite of our respectable numbers we shall scarcely reach Vitré without being attacked. If you are, as you say, thoroughly vouched for by citizen Barras, you must be a person of considerable importance. Now, one who is so well protected by Barras has everything to fear from Master Cadoudal, who does not feel for the Directory the respect which it deserves. Moreover, I have been officially notified, both personally and as the leader of this column, that a citizeness named Mademoiselle Rotrou, might perhaps claim the favor of travelling under the protection of our bayonets. When I say 'claim the favor,' I merely quote the words in the letter, for, in this case, the favor would be all on my side."

"I am, indeed, Mademoiselle Rotrou, sir, and I am grateful to Monsieur Barras for his kind remembrance. But, as I have already said, all my precautions are taken; and some claims to consideration, which I may call to the attention of the Chouan leader, incline me to believe that I run little danger in that direction. However, colonel, I am equally grateful to you, and I am particularly glad that you share my aversion for the miserable creature whom they have given you for a travelling companion."

"Oh! as for us," said Colonel Hulot, "we are not at all afraid of him. We are no longer in the times of Saint-Just and Lebas, a fact which I must confess I deplore with all my heart. They were brave men who exposed themselves to the same dangers as we ourselves; who fought with us, and who, since they remained on the field at the imminent risk of being shot, had the right to proceed against those

who abandoned them. The soldiers did not love them but they did respect them; and when they stretched forth their hands over a head they understood that no one had the right to rescue it from the vengeance of the Republic. But as for our François Goulin, who will run away at the first shot he hears, taking his guillotine with him, there is not a soldier among our six thousand who would let him touch a hair of one of our officers."

Just then Mademoiselle Rotrou was told that her carriage was ready.

"Citizeness," said Colonel Hulot, "it is part of my duty to clear the road along which our column is to pass. I have with me a small detachment of cavalry composed of three hundred hussars and two hundred chasseurs, and I am about to send them—not for you, but for myself—along the road which we are to follow. If you are in need, you have only to apply to the officer in command, and he is under orders to do his utmost to serve you, and even, if you desire it, to escort you as far as Vitré."

"Thank you, sir," said Mademoiselle de Fargas, giving her hand to the old soldier; "but I should never forgive myself were I to imperil the lives of your soldiers, which are so precious as defenders of the Republic, to assure the safety of a life as humble and of as little importance as mine."

With these words Diane went out, escorted by the colonel, who gallantly gave her his hand to assist her to enter the carriage. The postilion was waiting with his horses.

"The road to Vitré," said Diane.

The postilion started. The soldiers drew aside to let the carriage pass; and as they were all aware of the manner in which she had reproved François Goulin, compliments, somewhat coarsely expressed, it is true, but none the less sincere, were not spared her.

As she set out, she heard the colonel shout: "To horse, chasseurs and hussars!"

And from three or four different directions she heard

the "boots and saddle" sounded. When they had driven through La Guerche, the postilion stopped, as if to adjust some portion of the harness, and, approaching the carriage, said: "Perhaps the citizeness has business with *them?*"

"With *them?*" repeated Diane astonished.

The postilion winked.

"Why, yes, with *them.*"

"Whom do you mean?"

"The friends, of course. They are here to the right and left of the road," and he imitated the hoot of a screech-owl.

"No," replied Diane, "go on; but when you have reached the foot of the hill stop."

"Bah!" muttered the postilion to himself, "you will stop all right enough, little mother."

They were then at the summit of a hill which sloped gently down for more than a mile and a half. Both sides of the road were lined with a thick growth of furze and thorn, which was in places dense enough to conceal three or four men.

The postilion started the horses at the usual pace, and drove down, singing an old Breton song in the Karnac dialect.

From time to time he elevated his voice, as if his song were a signal which the people along the side of the road understood. Diane, who knew that she was surrounded with Chouans, used her eyes to good advantage without uttering a word. This postilion might be a spy, whom Goulin had set to watch her, and she had not forgotten his threat should she give him any advantage over her, or fall into his hands again. Just as they reached the foot of the hill, where a little path crossed the road, a man on horseback sprang out of the woods to stop the carriage; but when he saw that its only occupant was a lady, he raised his hat.

The postilion turned round as he saw him, and said in a low tone: "Do not be afraid; that is General Roundhead."

"Madame," said the horseman, with the greatest polite-

ness, "I believe that you come from La Guerche, and possibly from Châteaubriant."

"Yes, sir," said she, leaning forward in the carriage without exhibiting any fear, although she saw no less than fifty horsemen ambushed along the side of the road.

"Do your political opinions permit you to give me any information concerning the strength of the Republican column which you have left behind you?"

"Both my political opinions and my social conscience permit me to do so," replied the fair traveller with a smile. "The column consists of six thousand men, who have just returned from prisons in England and Holland. They are commanded by a brave man named Colonel Hulot; but they have in their train a miserable wretch whom they call François Goulin, and a horrible machine which they call the guillotine. When I entered the town I had an altercation with the aforesaid François Goulin, who has promised me that I shall make the acquaintance of his machine, if ever I fall into his hands. This made me so popular with the soldiers, who detest their travelling companion, that Colonel Hulot insisted upon an interview with me, and wished to give me an escort as far as Vitré, lest I should otherwise fall into the hands of the Chouans. But as I left Paris with the express intention of falling into the hands of the Chouans, I refused his escort. Then I told the postilion to drive on, and here I am, delighted to meet you, General Cadoudal, and to express to you my admiration for your courage, and the esteem which your character inspired in my breast. As for the escort which was to have accompanied me, there it is just coming out of the town. It consists of two hundred chasseurs and three hundred hussars. Kill as few of those brave fellows as you can, and you will please me."

"I will not conceal from you, madame," replied Cadoudal, "that there will be an encounter between my men and that detachment. Will you go on as far as Vitré, where I will rejoin you after the fight, as I am anxious to learn more

definitely the motive of a journey for which you have given me an improbable cause."

"It is none the less the true one," replied Diane; "and as a proof, if you will permit, I will remain to witness the engagement. Since I have to join your army, this will serve as an apprenticeship."

Cadoudal gazed at the little column, which grew in size as it approached, then said to the postilion: "Place madame where she will be in no danger; and if we are beaten, explain to the Blues that I, to her great despair, prevented her from continuing her journey." Bowing to Diane, he added: "Madame, pray for the good cause while I fight for it." Then, darting down the path, he rejoined his ambushed companions.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE BATTLE

CADOUDAL exchanged a few words with his comrades, and four of them, who were not mounted and who acted as officers to carry his orders into the underbrush and heather, glided away immediately, and passing between the thorn bushes, reached the foot of two sturdy oaks, whose broad branches and thick foliage made a rampart against the sun. These two oaks stood at the two ends of the avenue which the road coming from the town to the crossroad formed.

When they reached this spot, they paused, ready to execute some manœuvre, which no one who did not know the general's plan of battle could have divined.

Diane's carriage was drawn into the crossroad, and she herself was stationed on a little knoll some thirty paces from the road, among a cluster of trees, where she could see without being seen.

The chasseurs and hussars advanced cautiously at a footpace. An advance-guard of ten men preceded them, and,

like the rest of the troop, marched with the greatest caution. When the last man had left the town, a shot was heard, and a man in the rear-guard fell. This was a signal. The two crests of the ravine which formed the road blazed forth fire. The Blues sought in vain for the enemy who had attacked them. They saw the fire and the smoke, and they felt the bullets, but they could distinguish neither the weapon nor the man who carried it. Confusion seized upon them once they felt themselves the prey of an invisible foe. Each one sought, not to escape death, but to give death for death. Some retraced their steps, others forced their horses to climb the slope; but no sooner did a man's head rise above the crest of the slope than he was shot at close quarters and fell back, overturning his horse with him like the Amazons in Rubens' "Battle of Thermodon."

Others again, and they were the more numerous, pushed forward, hoping to pass the ambush and thus escape the net which had trapped them. But Cadoudal, when he saw this movement, for which he had apparently been waiting, set spurs to his horse, and galloped out, followed by his forty men, to meet them. They fought along the road for about two hundred yards.

Those who attempted to turn back found the way barred by Chouans, who discharged their pieces in their faces and forced them to return. Finally those who pushed forward came in contact with Cadoudal and his men. But after a few moments the latter appeared to give way and fled.

The Blues at once started in pursuit. But scarcely had the last Chouan passed the two great oaks which were guarded by the four men than they began to push with all their strength, and the two giants, which had been previously separated from their roots with an axe, bent toward each other and fell with crashing branches and a tremendous noise upon the road, which they thus closed by an impassable barrier. The Blues were following the Whites so closely that two of their number, together with their horses, were crushed by the falling trees.

The same manœuvre took place at the other end of the road. Two trees dislodged from their bases fell across the road, and their interlacing branches formed a barrier like that which had just closed up the other end of the road. Thus men and horses were caught as in a huge arena, and each Chouan could choose his man, aim at discretion, and bring him down without fail.

Cadoudal and his forty horsemen discarded their horses, which were now useless, and, rifle in hand, were about to join in the struggle, when Mademoiselle de Fargas, who was watching the sanguinary drama with all the ardor of her lion-like nature, suddenly heard the gallop of a horse coming along the road from Vitré, and, turning, she recognized the man with whom she had travelled.

When he saw that Georges and his companions were about to join in the fray, he attracted their attention by shouting: "Stop! Wait for me!"

And no sooner had he joined them, amid cries of welcome, than he leaped from his horse, tossed the bridle to a Chouan to hold, and threw himself upon Cadoudal's neck. Then he selected a rifle, filled his pockets with cartridges, and followed by twenty men, Cadoudal taking the others, he darted into the thicket which lined the left bank of the road, while the general disappeared on the right side.

The redoubled fusillade announced the arrival of these reinforcements for the Whites.

Mademoiselle de Fargas was too much absorbed in watching what was passing before her to pay much attention to Monsieur d'Argentan's conduct. She understood simply that the pretended tax-gatherer of Dinan was in reality a disguised royalist—which fact explained why he was bringing money from Paris to Brittany, instead of sending it from Brittany to Paris.

The heroic efforts of this little band of five hundred men would furnish material for an epic poem.

Their courage was all the greater as they were, as we have said, fighting against an invisible danger, calling to

it, defying it, and shrieking with rage because it would not rise up before them. Nothing could make the Chouans change their deadly tactics. Death flew whistling by, and the Blues simply saw the smoke and heard the report. A man would throw up his hands and fall back in the saddle, and the frightened riderless animal would dash wildly into the thicket and gallop madly on until an invisible hand checked him, and tied his bridle to the branch of a tree.

Here and there in the fields some one of these horses could be seen rearing and tugging at his bridle, trying to escape from the strange master who had just made him prisoner. The butchery lasted an hour. At the end of that time, they heard the drums beating the charge. It was the infantry coming to the assistance of the cavalry.

Colonel Hulot commanded in person. His first care, with the infallible glance of a veteran, had been to get an accurate idea of the ground, and to open an exit for the unfortunates who were confined in this sort of a tunnel into which the Chouans had converted the road.

He had the horses unharnessed from the gun-carriages, the artillery being useless for the sort of combat upon which they were about to engage. The horses were then attached to the fallen trees, which they dragged from their transverse position across the road, thus opening a means of retreat for the stricken cavalry. Then he sent five hundred men to charge along the road, with levelled bayonets, just as if the enemy had been in sight. He ordered the most expert of his sharpshooters to return shot for shot—in other words, whenever a puff of smoke appeared they were to fire straight at it, since it denoted that a man was lying in ambush at that spot. This was almost the only way to reply to the fusillade of the Whites, who almost invariably shot from cover, and rarely showed themselves save at the moment of taking aim. Habit, and, above all, necessity, had made many of the Republican soldiers exceedingly skilful at this quick exchange of shots.

Sometimes the men upon whom they retaliated were

killed outright. Sometimes when they fired by guesswork, they were only wounded. In that case they would not move. Their shots were forgotten in the turmoil, and the soldiers frequently passed very near them without discovering them. The Chouans were noted for their marvellous courage in stifling groans which their insufferable agony would have elicited from any other soldier.

The fight lasted until the first shades of night were falling. Diane, who did not lose a single incident, fumed with impatience at not being able to take part in it. She would have liked to don male attire, arm herself with a gun, and rush upon the Republicans, whom she hated. But her costume, and, above all, the lack of a weapon, rendered her helpless.

About seven o'clock Colonel Hulot ordered the retreat to be sounded. In this kind of warfare day was dangerous, but night was more than dangerous, it was fatal.

The sounds of the trumpets and the drums, announcing the retreat, redoubled the ardor of the Chouans. Thus to abandon the field of battle and return to the town was an avowal on the part of the Republicans that they were beaten.

Shots accompanied them to the very gates of La Guerche, leaving three or four hundred dead on the field, ignorant of the losses which the Chouans had sustained, and without a single prisoner—to the intense chagrin of François Goulin, who had succeeded in getting his instrument inside the town, and who had taken it to the other end of the town in order to be near the scene of battle.

All his efforts were now useless, and François Goulin took up his lodgings in a house where he need not lose sight of his precious machine.

Since they had left Paris, neither officer nor soldier had chosen to lodge in the house of the commissioner extraordinary. He had been given a guard of twelve men, and that was all. Four men guarded the guillotine.

CHAPTER XXIV

PORTIA

THE day had had no material results for Cadoudal and his men, but the moral effect was immense.

All the great Vendéan chiefs had disappeared: Stofflet and Charette were dead; the Abbé Bernier had yielded, as we have said; and, finally, the Vendée had been pacificated by the genius and patience of General Hoche. And we have seen how Hoche himself had disturbed Bonaparte in far-off Italy by offering men and money to the Directory.

Of the Chouannerie and the Vendée, the Chouannerie alone remained. Cadoudal was the only one of the chiefs who had refused to bend the knee. He had published his manifesto and announced that he had taken up arms again. Then, besides the troops still remaining in the Vendée and Brittany, they had sent six thousand men against him.

Cadoudal, with a thousand men, had not only held at bay six thousand veterans who had seen five years of active warfare, but he had driven them back to the town whence they had come, and had killed three or four hundred of them.

Thus the new Breton insurrection had opened with a victory.

When the Blues were fairly in the town, and had posted their sentinels, Cadoudal also ordered a retreat, for he meditated a fresh expedition for the night.

The victorious Chouans could be seen joyfully returning through the thickets of furze and briar which edged the road, and above which, now that they were marching without disguise, they sometimes towered more than a head. They were calling to each other and crowding around one of their number who was playing the bag-pipe, as soldiers follow the trumpet of the regiment. The bag-pipe was their trumpet.

At the bottom of the slope, just where the overturned trees had formed a barricade which the Republican cavalry had been unable to pass, where they had separated to take part in the fight, so did Cadoudal and D'Argentan meet there after it was over. They were overjoyed to meet again, for they had scarcely had time for a hurried greeting before.

D'Argentan, who had not fought for a long time before, had gone into the fray with such good-will that he had got himself a bayonet thrust in the arm. He had thrown his coat over his shoulder in consequence, and appeared with his arm in a sling, improvised from his bloody handkerchief.

As for Diane, she now came down from the little knoll, and approached the two friends with her firm, masculine step.

"What," exclaimed Cadoudal, on perceiving her, "did you remain, my fair Amazon?"

D'Argentan uttered a cry of surprise, for he recognized Mademoiselle Rotrou, the "post-mistress" of Vitré.

"Permit me," said Cadoudal, still addressing Diane, and indicating his companion with a wave of his hand, "to present to you one of my best friends."

"Monsieur d'Argentan?" said Diane, smiling. "I already have the honor of his acquaintance. Indeed we are old acquaintances of three days' standing. We travelled all the way from Paris together."

"Then it would have been his privilege to present me to you, had I not already done so myself." Then, addressing Diane more particularly, he added: "You were going to Vitré, mademoiselle?"

"Monsieur d'Argentan," said Diane, without replying to Cadoudal's question, "on the way you offered to act as my immediate intercessor with General Cadoudal, if I had any request to make of him."

"I was then under the impression, mademoiselle, that you did not know the general," replied D'Argentan.

"But when once one has seen you, you need no intercessor, and I answer for it that my friend here will grant you whatever you may ask."

"That, sir," said Diane, "is pure gallantry, and a trick to evade your promise to me. I summon you positively to keep your word."

"Speak, madame. I am ready to second your request with all my power," said D'Argentan.

"I want to join the general's army," said Diane, calmly.

"In what capacity?" asked D'Argentan.

"In the capacity of a volunteer," replied Diane coldly.

The two friends looked at each other.

"You hear, Cadoudal?" asked D'Argentan.

Cadoudal's brow grew grave, and his whole countenance assumed a stern expression. Then, after an instant's silence, he said: "Madame, the proposal is a serious one, and deserves serious reflection. I will tell you something curious. I was at first ordained for the church; and I took in my heart all my vows of ordination, which I have never broken. I do not doubt that in you I should gain a charming aide-de-camp of undoubted bravery. I believe that women are as brave as men. But in our old religious Brittany there exist certain prejudices which often force us to discourage too great devotion. Several of my colleagues have received, it is true, the wives and daughters of royalists who have been assassinated, but to them is due the protection and asylum which they demand."

"And how do you know," returned Diane, "that I am not the daughter of an assassinated noble, and perhaps also the sister of another, in which case I have a double claim to the hospitality which I invoke?"

"In that case," said D'Argentan, with a mocking smile, joining in the conversation, "how does it happen that you have a passport signed by Barras?"

"Will you be good enough to show me your own, Monsieur d'Argentan?" asked Diane.

D'Argentan took it laughingly from the pocket of the

coat which hung over his shoulder and gave it to her. She unfolded it and read:

Give free passage throughout the territory of the Republic to Citizen Sebastien Argentan, tax-gatherer at Dinan.
(Signed) BARRAS, REWBELL, LA REVEILLIÈRE-LEPAUX.

"And will you be good enough to tell me, sir," said Diane, "how, as a friend of General Cadoudal and fighting against the Republic, you are supposed to have free passage throughout the territory of the Republic, in the character of tax-collector of Dinan. Do not let us lift our masks, sir, let us remove them entirely."

"Faith, that is well answered," said Cadoudal, who was deeply impressed by Diane's coolness and persistency. "Come, speak! How did you get that passport? Explain it to mademoiselle. Perhaps she will then deign to explain how she came by hers."

"Ah!" said D'Argentan, laughing, "that is a secret which I dare not reveal before our prudish friend Cadoudal; however, if you insist, mademoiselle, at the risk of making him blush, I will say that there lives in the Rue des Colonnes at Paris, near the Théâtre Feydeau, a certain Aurélie de Sainte-Amour, to whom Barras can refuse nothing, and who, in turn, can refuse me nothing."

"And furthermore," continued Cadoudal, "the name on the passport conceals another, which is sufficient in itself to give him free passage among Vendéans, Chouans, and royalists who wear the white cockade, whether at home or abroad. Your travelling companion, mademoiselle, who has now nothing to conceal, and whom I will consequently present to you under his real name, is not Monsieur d'Argentan, but Coster de Saint-Victor; and had he given no pledge, heretofore, the wound which he has just received in fighting for our sacred cause—"

"If it needs only a wound to prove one's devotion, that is a very simple matter," said Diane, coldly.

"What do you mean?" asked Cadoudal.

"See!" said Diane.

And drawing the sharp dagger, which had given her brother his death-blow, from her belt, she struck her arm so violently in the place where Coster de Saint-Victor had received his wound that the blade entered on one side and came out on the other.

"And as for the name," said Diane, addressing the wondering young man, "although my name is not Coster de Saint-Victor, it is Diane de Fargas! My father was assassinated four years ago, my brother a week ago."

Coster de Saint-Victor started and glanced at the dagger which she had left in her arm, and, recognizing it as the one which had in his presence done to death the young Lucien, he said: "I am a witness and can testify that this young girl has spoken the truth when she says that she is as worthy as any one to be received into the royalist army, and to be received among us and as one with us in our holy cause."

Cadoudal held out his hand to her.

"From now on," said he, "if you have no father, mademoiselle, I will be your father. If you no longer have a brother, I will be your brother. I know there was once a Roman woman who, fearing her husband's weakness, and to reassure him, pierced her own right arm with the blade of a knife. Since we live in times which force us to conceal our real names, yours will be Portia, henceforth, instead of Diane de Fargas, as in the past. And as you are now one of us, and at the first stroke have won the rank of leader, you will attend the meeting which I am about to hold when the surgeon has dressed your arm."

"Thanks, general," said Diane; "but as for the surgeon, I have no more need of his services than has Monsieur Coster de Saint-Victor; for my wound is no more serious than his."

Drawing the dagger from the wound where it had remained, she slit up her sleeve, revealing her beautiful arm; then, addressing Coster de Saint-Victor, she said, laughingly: "Comrade, be good enough to lend me your cravat."

CHAPTER XXV

CADOUDAL'S IDEA

HALF an hour later the Chouans were encamped in a half circle around the town of La Guerche. They bivouacked in groups of ten, fifteen, and twenty, with a fire for each group, and were cooking their supper as peacefully as if a gunshot had never been heard from Redon to Cancale.

The cavalry bivouacked by themselves, on the borders of a little brook which formed one of the sources of the Seiche. Their horses were saddled but not bridled, so that horses as well as men could enjoy their food.

In the midst of the encampment, seated under an immense oak, Cadoudal, Coster de Saint-Victor, Mademoiselle de Fargas, and five or six of the Chouans were gathered. These latter deserve that their pseudonyms of Branche-d'Or, Brise-Bleu, Chante-en-Hiver, Bénédicité, Monte-à-l'Assaut, Cœur-de-Roi, and Tiffauges should be handed down to posterity together with that of their leader.

Mademoiselle de Fargas and Coster de Saint-Victor ate with good appetites, using the hand which was not disabled. Mademoiselle de Fargas had wished to empty her six thousand francs into the general funds, but Cadoudal had refused receiving her money only as a deposit.

The six or seven Chouan leaders whom we have named, ate as if they were not sure of being able to eat on the morrow. But the Whites did not have as many privations to endure as the Republicans, although the latter were able to exact contributions. The Whites, with whom the people of the neighborhood were in entire sympathy, and who paid for whatever they ate, lived in comparative abundance.

As for Cadoudal, preoccupied with some thought which

seemed to be struggling in his mind, he went and came, having taken only a glass of water, his customary beverage. He had obtained from Mademoiselle de Fargas all the information which she could give him about François Goulin and his guillotine. He stopped suddenly, and turning to the group of Breton leaders, he said: "I want a willing man to go to La Guerche and get such information as I require."

All rose spontaneously.

"General," said Chante-en-Hiver, "without wronging my comrades, I think I am better fitted than any of them for this mission. My brother lives at La Guerche. I will wait until it is dark, and then I will go to him. If I am stopped I can appeal to him; he will answer for me, and that will be the end of it. He knows the town like his own pocket; we will do whatever you want done, and I will be back with the information within the hour."

"Very well," said Cadoudal, "this is what I have decided upon. You all know that the Blues are dragging a guillotine around with them, to strike terror to our hearts and to intimidate us; and that the infamous Goulin has charge of it. François Goulin, who was, you will remember, the hero of the drownings at Nantes. He and Perdraux were Carrier's tools. They have both boasted of having drowned more than eight hundred priests. Well, Providence has sent this man again, who went to Paris, not only to ask immunity, but reward for his infamous crimes, that he might expiate his ill-doing on the spot where he committed it. He has brought the infamous guillotine among us. Let him perish by the foul instrument that he watches over; he is not worthy of a soldier's bullet. Now we must take both him and his instrument, and transport them to some spot where we are absolute masters, that the execution may not be interfered with. Chante-en-Hiver will go to La Guerche; he will come back and tell us all about the house where Goulin lodges, the place where the guillotine stands, and the number of men who guard it. When we ascertain these facts, I have a plan which I shall

explain to you; and if you agree to it we will carry it out this very night."

The chiefs applauded loudly.

"The deuce!" observed Coster de Saint-Victor, "I have never seen a man guillotined, and I have sworn that I would have nothing to do with the abominable machine until my turn came to be beheaded; but when François Goulin is brought to book, I promise to be in the front rank of spectators."

"You hear, Chante-en-Hiver?" asked Cadoudal.

Chante-en-Hiver did not wait for him to speak twice. He laid aside all his weapons with the exception of his knife, with which he never parted. Then, asking Coster de Saint-Victor to look at his watch, and learning that it was half-past eight, he promised to return by ten. Five minutes later he disappeared.

"Now," said Cadoudal, addressing the remaining chiefs, "how many horses were taken on the battlefield, with their saddles, etc.?"

"Twenty-one," said Cœur-de-Roi; "I counted them myself."

"Can we find twenty chasseur or hussar uniforms that are complete?"

"General, there are nearly one hundred and fifty dead on the field of battle," replied Branche d'Or; "we have only to take our pick."

"We must have twenty hussar uniforms, and one of them must belong to a quartermaster-general, or a sub-lieutenant."

Branche-d'Or rose, whistled, collected a dozen men, and started off with them.

"I have an idea," said Coster de Saint-Victor. "Is there a printing-shop at Vitré?"

"Yes," replied Cadoudal; "I had my manifesto printed there the day before yesterday. The manager is a worthy man named Borel, who is entirely with us."

"I have a good mind," said Coster, "since I have nothing else to do, to get into Mademoiselle de Fargas's car-

riage, go to Vitré, and order some placards inviting the people of La Guerche, including the six thousand Blues, to witness the execution, by his own executioner, and his own guillotine, of François Goulin, government commissioner. It would be a good joke, and it would amuse our people in the Paris salons."

"Do it, Coster," said Cadoudal. "One cannot employ too much publicity and solemnity when God executes justice."

"Forward, D'Argentan, my friend," said Coster; "only some one will have to lend me a jacket."

Cadoudal made a sign, and each of the leaders pulled off his own to offer it to Coster.

"If the execution takes place," he asked, "where will it be?"

"Faith!" said Cadoudal, "three hundred paces from here, at the top of the hill just in front of me."

"That is all I want to know," said Coster de Saint-Victor. And, calling to the postilion, he added: "My friend, as you may take it into your head to object to what I am going to tell you to do, I want to tell you beforehand that all objections will be useless. Your horses are rested and they have eaten; you are rested and you have eaten. You will put the horses to the carriage; and as you cannot return to La Guerche, because the road is obstructed, you will take me to Vitré, to Monsieur Borel, the printer. If you agree to it, you shall have two crowns of six livres each—not assignats, but crowns. If you refuse, one of these lads here will take your place, and will naturally receive the two crowns instead of you."

The postilion took no time for reflection.

"I will go," said he.

"Very well," said Coster; "and since you have shown such willingness, here is one of the crowns in advance."

Five minutes later the carriage was harnessed and Coster was on his way to Vitré.

"Now," said Mademoiselle de Fargas, "as I have no

part to play in all these preparations, I will ask your permission to take a little rest. I have not slept for five days and nights."

Cadoudal spread his cloak on the ground and on it five or six goatskins, a portmanteau served for a pillow, and Mademoiselle de Fargas began her first night's bivouac, and with it her apprenticeship to civil war.

As the clock of La Guerche was chiming ten, Cadoudal heard a voice at his ear which said: "Here I am."

It was Chante-en-Hiver, who had returned, as he had promised. He had gathered all the necessary information, and he told Cadoudal all that we already know. Goulin occupied the last house in the town of La Guerche. Twelve men, who slept in a room on the ground-floor, constituted his private guard. Four men took turns in acting as sentinels at the foot of the guillotine, relieving each other every two hours; the three off guard slept in the anteroom on the ground-floor of François Goulin's house. The horses which were used to pull the machine were stabled behind the same house.

At half-past ten, Branche-d'Or arrived in his turn; he had taken the uniforms from twenty dead hussars and brought them with him.

"Choose twenty men who can wear these clothes without looking as if they were masquerading in them. You will take command of them. I suppose you did as I told you, and found one uniform belonging to a quartermaster-general or a sub-lieutenant?"

"Yes, general."

"You will put it on, and take the command of these twenty men. You will take the road to Château-Giron, so that you will reach La Guerche at the other end by the road opposite to it. When the sentinel challenges you, you will advance and say that you are come from General Hedouville at Rennes. You will ask for Colonel Hulot's house, which they will show you. You will be careful not to go there. Chante-en-Hiver, who will be your second in com-

mand, will show you the way through the town if you do not know it."

"I do know it, general," replied Branche-d'Or; "but no matter, a good fellow like Chante-en-Hiver is never in the way."

"You will go straight to Goulin's house. Thanks to your uniform, you will have no difficulty. While two men approach the sentinel and talk to him, the other eighteen will enter the house and seize the Blues who are there. You will make them swear not to offer any opposition at the sword's point. As soon as they have sworn, you need trouble no further about them; they will keep their oath. Masters below, you will then go up to François Goulin's room. As I have no idea that he will defend himself, I will not tell you what to do in case of resistance. As for the sentinel, you understand how important it is that he should not cry 'To arms!' He will surrender or you will kill him. In the meantime Chante-en-Hiver will take the horses from the stable and harness them to the machine; and as it is on the road, all you will have to do is to drive straight ahead in order to rejoin us. When once the Blues have given you their word, you can trust them with the secret of your mission. I am firmly convinced that there is not one among them who would court death for the sake of François Goulin, and that, on the contrary, you will find more than one who will give you good advice. Thus, for example, Chante-en-Hiver neglected to find out where the executioner lived, probably because I neglected to tell him to do so. I suppose none of you would care to fill his office, therefore he is indispensable to us. I leave the rest to your intelligence. We will make the attempt about three o'clock in the morning. At two o'clock we shall be where we were yesterday. A rocket will notify us that you have been successful."

Branche-d'Or and Chante-en-Hiver exchanged a few words in a low tone. One was objecting to something that the other was saying; finally they seemed to have

come to some conclusion in the matter, and, turning to the general, they said: "That is enough, general. Everything shall be done as you say."

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ROAD TO THE SCAFFOLD

ABOUT two o'clock the noise of a carriage was heard. It was Coster de Saint-Victor returning with the handbills. As he had been certain of the successful issue of the affair, he had ordered the printer to post a hundred in the town of Vitré.

The handbill read as follows:

You are invited to assist at the execution of François Goulin, commissioner-extraordinary of the Directory. He will be executed to-morrow at nine o'clock in the morning, on the road from Vitré to La Guerche, at a place called Moutiers, upon his own guillotine.

General Cadoudal, by whose order this execution takes place, offers the truce of God to all who shall be present at this act of justice. GEORGES CADOUDAL.

From his camp at La Guerche.

In passing through Etrelles, Saint-Germain du Pinel and Moutiers, Coster had left copies with the inhabitants, whom he had awakened for the purpose, and whom he charged to inform their neighbors of the good fortune that was in store for them on the following day. Nor had any of these people complained of being awakened. A commissioner of the Republic is not executed every day.

Horses were harnessed to the trees that had been felled in that direction, as the Republicans had done at the other end of the ravine, in order to make the road passable.

At two o'clock, as had been agreed, Cadoudal gave the signal to his men, who took up their places behind the thickets where they had fought during the day.

Half an hour earlier Branche-d'Or, Chante-en-Hiver and

his twenty men had started off on the road to Château-Giron, dressed as hussars. An hour passed in absolute silence. The Chouans could hear the sentinels calling from one to another from where they were posted.

About a quarter to three the disguised Chouans appeared at the end of the main street in La Guerche, and, after a moment's parley with the sentinel, were directed to the town-hall where Colonel Hulot was lodged. But Branche-d'Or and Chante-en-Hiver were not so simple as to follow the main thoroughfares of the town; they took to the lanes, where they might have been thought a patrol watching over the safety of the town.

They went thus to the house where François Goulin lodged. There everything passed off as Cadoudal had foreseen. The sentinel at the guillotine, seeing the little troop approach from the centre of the town, was not at all alarmed, and they had a pistol at his throat before he suspected that they had aught to say to him. The Republicans, taken by surprise in the house where they were asleep, made no resistance. François Goulin was caught in his bed, and had been rolled up and tied in his sheet before he had time to utter a single cry of alarm.

As for the executioner, he and his assistant were lodged in a little pavilion in the garden, and as Cadoudal had foretold, the Republicans themselves, when apprised of the object of the expedition, pointed out the hole where the two foul creatures were sleeping. The Blues promised furthermore to take and distribute the bills, and to ask Colonel Hulot's permission to be present at the execution.

A rocket went up from the hill at three o'clock in the morning, announcing to Cadoudal and his men that the expedition had been successfully terminated. And at the same time they caught the echo of the rumbling of a heavy cart which was conveying one of the finest specimens of Monsieur Guillotin's invention.

Seeing that his men were not pursued, Cadoudal called the Chouans, and they removed the dead bodies from the

middle of the road, that the wagon might not be impeded in its progress. It was not until they were half-way down the hill that they heard the first blast of the trumpets and the first beats of the drums.

The fact is that no one had been in any haste to inform Colonel Hulot. The one who was charged with the duty did not forget to take with him a number of the handbills; and instead of first reporting the audacious deed which Cadoudal's men had just perpetrated, he began by thrusting a handful of the bills under his eyes. Then, as they told the colonel nothing, he was forced to elicit the necessary information by a series of questions which brought forth the truth bit by bit. He finally heard it all, however, and flew into a terrible passion, ordering a hot pursuit of the Whites and the rescue of the Government commissioner at any cost.

Then the trumpets had sounded and the drums beat. But the officers wheedled their old colonel until they disarmed his anger, and obtained a tacit permission to go, at their own risk and peril, to see this execution which the colonel himself was dying to witness. But he knew that this was impossible, and that he would only jeopardize his own head by such an act; he therefore contented himself with telling his secretary, who had not dared to ask leave, to go with the other officers and bring him an exact report. The young man jumped for joy when he learned that he was to go and see François Goulin's head cut off.

The man must indeed have inspired profound disgust when Whites and Blues, citizens and soldiers, approved thus unanimously of an act which was open to such criticism from the standpoint of the right.

As for François Goulin, he had no very clear idea of what was impending over him until he saw the Chouans join and fraternize with his escort. Taken by men wearing the Republican uniform, rolled up and tied in his sheet before they had answered his questions, thrown into a carriage with the executioner, his dear friend, and following in the

wake of his beloved machine, it will be readily understood how impossible it was that the truth should have dawned upon him.

But when he saw the pretended hussars exchanging jokes with the Chouans, who walked along the embankment at their side; when, after persistently asking what they intended to do with him, and why they had entered his domicile and laid violent hands upon his person, he was presented, by way of reply, with a placard announcing his own execution; then, indeed, did he realize the full gravity of his predicament, unless he were rescued by the Republicans, or his captors should be moved to pity, two chances so extremely problematical that he could place no dependence upon them.

His first idea was to address the executioner and impress upon him that he was to obey no one save himself, since he had been sent from Paris with the injunction to obey him in all things. But the man was himself so cast down, and looked around with such a haggard eye, being firmly convinced that he was to die in the same place and at the same hour with the man whose custom it was to put others to death, that the unhappy François Goulin soon saw that he had nothing to expect from that quarter.

Then he thought of crying out, appealing, entreating for help; but all the faces expressed such utter indifference that he shook his head and said to himself: "No, no, it is useless."

Thus they reached the foot of the hill. There the Chouans made a halt. They wished to take off their borrowed costumes and put on their own uniform, which consisted of the vest, breeches and gaiters of the Breton peasant. A number of curious people had already gathered there. The bills had accomplished wonders; from six and even eight miles in the country round, people were hastening to the spot. Everybody knew that this was the same François Goulin who had no other name throughout the Vendée and at Nantes than the Drowner.

The guillotine shared with him in their curiosity. The instrument was wholly unknown in this corner of France, which bordered upon Finistère (*finis terræ*, the end of the earth). Men and women questioned each other as to how it worked, where the condemned man was placed, and how the knife went up and down. People who did not know that Goulin was the hero of the occasion addressed him, asking for information. One of them said to him: "Do you believe a person dies as soon as his head is cut off? When I cut off the head of a goose or a duck it lives for more than a quarter of an hour afterward."

And Goulin, who was no more sure than he that death was instantaneous, writhed in his bonds and said to the executioner: "Did you not tell me one day that the heads of the people who had been guillotined gnawed at the bottom of your basket?"

But the executioner, stupefied with terror, either did not reply at all, or only mumbled such incoherent words as revealed the mortal fear which was upon him whose lips were thus clogged.

After a halt of a quarter of an hour, which gave the Chouans time to resume their own uniforms, they started again; but they caught sight of the entire population hastening from the left to witness the execution.

It was a curious thing to see these men, who, on the previous day, had been threatened with the fatal instrument, and who had looked with dread upon the man who had it in charge—it was a curious thing to see this instrument, like Diomedes' horses, which fed upon human flesh, cast itself upon its master and devour him in turn.

A black mass, preceded by a stick with a white handkerchief floating at the end, hurried through the crowd. They were the Republicans who had taken advantage of the truce of God which Cadoudal had offered them, and were coming, preceded by the white emblem of truce, to join the silence of scorn to the angry outbursts of the populace, who, having nothing at stake, respected nothing.

Cadoudal ordered a halt, and, after courteously saluting the Blues, with whom he and his men had exchanged death blows on the previous night, he said: "Come, gentlemen. The spectacle is a grand one and well worth the presence of men of all parties. Cut-throats, drowners, and assassins have no flag; or if they have one it is the standard of death —the black flag. Come, we will none of us march beneath that flag."

And he went on again, mingling with the Republicans, and trusting them as they trusted him.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE EXECUTION

AN ONLOOKER, watching the strange procession as it approached from the far side of Moutiers and slowly ascended the hill, would have found it difficult to make out the meaning of the strange jumble of men on foot and on horseback: Whites in the costume made sacred by Charette, Cathelineau and Cadoudal, Blues in the Republican uniform, accompanied by women, children and peasants, and rolling along in the midst of this human tide, restless as the waves of the ocean, an unknown machine—unless the spectator had seen one of Coster de Saint-Victor's placards.

But these placards were for the time being considered merely as one of those gasconades which the parties permitted themselves at this period; and many persons had come from afar, not to see the promised execution—that would have been too much to expect—but to learn the explanation of the promise which had been made them.

Moutiers was the appointed meeting place, and all the peasants in the neighborhood had been waiting in the public square of that town since eight o'clock in the morning.

Suddenly they were told that the procession, which was

growing with every step, was approaching the town. Every one at once hastened to the spot indicated; and there they could see the Vendéan chiefs, who formed the advance-guard, half-way up the hill. In their hands they were carrying green branches, as in the old days of expiation.

The crowd which had gathered at Moutiers streamed along the road; and, like two rivers meeting, the two human floods surged against each other and mingled their waters.

There was a moment of confusion and tumult. Every one fought to get near the cart which carried the scaffold and the carriage which contained Goulin, the executioner and his assistant. But as they were all animated by the same desire, and as enthusiasm was perhaps greater than curiosity, those who had caught a glimpse thought it only right to fall back and give the others a chance to have an equal opportunity.

As they advanced, Goulin grew paler and paler; for he realized that they were making straight for a goal which they would surely reach. Moreover, he had seen, on the bill which had been thrust into his hands, that Moutiers was to be the scene of his execution; and he knew only too well that the town they were approaching at every step was Moutiers. He rolled his eyes around the crowd, unable to fathom this mingling of Chouans and Republicans, who on the previous evening were waging such furious warfare and yet in the morning united in such friendly fashion to form his escort. From time to time he closed his eyes, doubtless in the vain hope of persuading himself that it was all a dream. But then the tempestuous roaring of the crowd and the swaying of the carriage must have carried with it the suggestion of a tempest at sea. Then he raised his arms, which he had succeeded in freeing from their shroud-like wrappings, beat the air like a crazy man, stood up, tried to cry out, and perhaps did cry out; but his voice was lost in the tumult, and he fell back again on the seat between his two gloomy companions. At last they reached

the plateau of Moutiers, and then there came a cry of "Halt!"

They had reached their destination.

More than ten thousand persons were assembled on this plateau. The nearest houses in the village were crowded with spectators and the trees along the roadside were loaded with human freight. A few men on horseback, and a woman with her arm in a sling, towered above the crowd.

The men were Cadoudal, Coster de Saint-Victor, and the Chouan leaders. The woman was Mademoiselle de Fargas, who, to familiarize herself with her future emotions upon the field of battle, had come in quest of the most intense of all emotions—that which is experienced by those who witness a death upon the scaffold.

When the procession had halted, and each person had placed himself as he or she wished to be placed during the execution, Cadoudal raised his hand in token that he wished to speak.

Every voice was hushed, and even the breath seemed to expire upon pale lips. A mournful silence ensued, and Goulin's eyes were fastened upon Cadoudal, of whose name and importance he was ignorant. He had none the less distinguished him from the others as perhaps the man whom he had come from afar to seek—the man who at their first meeting was to change rôles with him, to make of himself the judge and executioner, and of the judge and executioner proper the victim—if an assassin can be described as a victim, no matter what manner of death was reserved for him. Cadoudal, as we have said, had signified that he wished to speak.

"Citizens," said he, addressing the Republicans, "as you see, I give you the title which you give yourselves—my brothers," he continued, addressing the Chouans—"and I give you the name with which God receives you in his bosom—your meeting here at Moutiers to-day, and its object, prove that each of you is convinced of the guilt of this man, who is deserving of the death which he is about

to suffer. And yet, Republicans, whom I hope some day to call brothers, you do not know this man as we do.

"One day, in 1793, my father and I were carrying some flour to Nantes. There was a famine in the town. It was scarcely light. Carrier, the infamous Carrier, had not yet arrived at Nantes. Therefore we must render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto Goulin the things which are Goulin's. It was Goulin who invented the drownings.

"My father and I were going along the Quai de la Loire. We saw a boat on which they were loading priests. A man was driving them into it two by two, and counting them as they went aboard. He counted ninety-seven of these priests, who were bound in couples. As they entered the boat they disappeared, for they were thrown into the hold. The boat left the shore and floated out into the middle of the Loire. This man stood in front with an oar.

"My father stopped his horse and said to me: 'Wait and watch, something infamous is about to happen here.'

"And in fact the boat had a plug. When the boat reached the middle of the stream, the unfortunates in the hold were thrown into the water. As they came up to the surface, this man and his wretched companions struck at these heads, which already wore the halo of martyrdom, and bruised them with their oars. It was that man there who urged them on to the terrible work. Two of the condemned men, however, were too far away to be struck; they made their way toward the bank, for they had found a sandbar which afforded them a foothold.

" 'Quick,' said my father, 'let us save those two.'

"We sprang from our horses and slipped down the bank of the Loire with our knives in our hands. They, thinking that we also were murderers, tried to escape from us. But we cried out to them: 'Come to us, men of God! these knives are to cut your bonds, not to strike you.'

"They came to us, and in an instant their hands were free, and we were on horseback, with them behind us, gal-

loping away. They were the worthy Abbes Briançon and Lacombe.

"They both took refuge with us in the forests of the Morbihan. One of them died of cold, hunger and fatigue, as so many of us have died. That was the Abbé Briançon.

"The other," said Cadoudal, pointing to a priest who tried to conceal himself among the crowd, "recovered, and to-day serves God with his prayers, as we serve him with our arms. That other is the Abbé Lacombe. There he is!

"From that time," he continued, pointing to Goulin, "this man, and always the same, presided at the drownings. In all the slaughter which took place at Nantes, he was Carrier's right arm. When Carrier was tried and condemned, François Goulin was tried at the same time; but he posed before the tribunal as an instrument who had been unable to refuse to obey the orders that were given him. I possess a letter written entirely by his hand."

Here Cadoudal drew a paper from his pocket.

"I wanted to send it to the tribunal to enlighten its conscience. This letter, written to his worthy colleague Perdraux, was his condemnation, since in it he described his mode of procedure. Listen, you men of hard-fought battles, and tell me if ever a war-bulletin made you shudder like this."

And amid solemn silence, Cadoudal read aloud the following letter:

CITIZEN—In the exaltation of your patriotism, you ask me how I make my Republican marriages.

When I get ready for the baths, I strip the men and women, and go through their clothing to see if they have any money or jewelry. I put the clothing in a great hamper, then I tie the man and woman together, face to face, by the wrists. I bring them to the banks of the Loire; they go aboard my boat, two by two, and two men push them from behind and throw them into the water, head first; then when they try to save themselves we have great clubs with which we beat them back.

That is what we call the civil marriage.

FRANÇOIS GOULIN.

"Do you know," continued Cadoudal, "what prevented me from sending that letter? It was the intercession of the good Abbé Lacombe. He said to me: 'If God has given this man a chance to escape, it is that he may have an opportunity to repent.'

"Now, has he repented? You see him. After having drowned more than fifteen hundred persons, he seizes the moment when the terror has been revived to ask the favor of returning to this same region where he was executioner, in order to make fresh executions. If he had repented, I also would have pardoned him; but since, like the dog in the Bible, he returns to his own vomit, since God has permitted him to fall into my hands after escaping those of the revolutionary tribunal, it is because God wishes him to die."

A moment of silence followed Cadoudal's words. Then the condemned man rose in his carriage, and cried in a stifled voice: "Mercy! mercy!"

"Well," said Cadoudal, rising in his stirrups, "so be it. Since you are standing there, look around you. There are ten thousand men who have come to see you die. If, among them, a single one asks for mercy, you shall have it."

"Mercy!" cried Lacombe, stretching out his arms.

Cadoudal rose again in his stirrups.

"You alone, father, of us all, have no right to ask for mercy for this man. You extended mercy to him on the day when you prevented me from sending his letter to the revolutionary tribunal. You may help him to die, but that is all that I can grant you."

Then in a voice which made itself heard by all the spectators, he asked for the second time: "Is there one among you who asks for mercy for this man?"

Not a voice replied.

"You have five minutes in which to make your peace with God," said Cadoudal to François Goulin; "and, unless it be a miracle from heaven, nothing can save you. Father," said he, addressing Lacombe, "you may give this man your

arm, and accompany him to the scaffold." Then, to the executioner, he said, "Do your duty!"

The executioner, who now saw that his only part in the performance would be the execution of his ordinary functions, rose and put his hand on Goulin's shoulder in token that he belonged to him.

The Abbé Lacombe approached the condemned man, but the latter pushed him back.

Then ensued a frightful struggle between the man who would neither pray nor die and his two executioners. In spite of his cries, his bites and his blasphemies, the executioner picked him up in his arms as if he had been a child; and, while the assistant prepared the knife, he carried him from his carriage to the platform of the guillotine.

The Abbé Lacombe went up first, with a ray of hope, and waited for the culprit; but his efforts were vain, for Goulin would not even put his lips to the crucifix.

Then on this awful stage there occurred a scene which is beyond description. The executioner and his assistant succeeded in stretching the condemned man upon the fatal plank. It rocked. Then the onlookers saw a flash as of lightning. It was the knife which fell. Then a dull thud. It was the head which had fallen.

A deep silence followed, and in its midst Cadoudal's voice could be heard, saying: "God's justice is done!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SEVENTH FRUCTIDOR

LET us leave Cadoudal to continue his desperate struggles against the Republicans, victor and vanquished by turns, and, with Pichegru—the last remaining hope of the Bourbons—let us cast an eye upon Paris, and pause before the pile erected by Marie de Medicis, where the citizen-directors still abide in the respective apartments we have mentioned.

Barras had received Bonaparte's message, with which Augereau was charged.

On the eve of the latter's departure, the young commander-in-chief, choosing the anniversary of the 14th of July, which corresponded to the 26th Messidor, had assembled the army for a celebration, and had had addresses drawn up in which the soldiers of the Army of Italy protested their attachment to the Republic and their willingness to die for it if necessary.

On the grand square at Milan a pyramid had been erected and surrounded by trophies taken from the enemy, that is to say, the flags and cannon. This pyramid bore the names of all the officers and soldiers who had died during the campaign in Italy.

Every Frenchman in Milan was urged to be present at this celebration, and more than twenty thousand men presented arms to the glorious trophies and the pyramid covered with the immortal names of the dead.

While these twenty thousand men formed in square and presented arms to their brothers, who lay stretched upon the battlefields of Arcola, Castiglione, and Rivoli, Bonaparte, with uncovered head, said, as he pointed to the pyramid:

"Soldiers! to-day is the anniversary of the 14th of July. You see before you, on the pyramid, the names of those soldiers who have died on the field of honor for the cause of liberty. They have set you an example. You belong absolutely to the Republic. The happiness of thirty millions of Frenchmen is in your hands, and to your hands is also intrusted the glory of that name which has received new lustre from your victories.

"Soldiers! I know that you are deeply grieved by the evils which threaten your country; but that country cannot be in real danger. The same men who are responsible for its triumph over allied Europe are still there. Mountains separate us from France. You would cross them with the speed of an eagle if it were necessary, in order to protect the safety of the Constitution, defend liberty and Republicanism.

"Soldiers! the government watches over the trust which

has been confided to it. The royalists, as soon as they appear, will forfeit their lives. Have no fear; but swear by the spirits of the heroes who have died beside us for liberty, swear by our flags implacable war against the enemies of the Republic and the Constitution of the Year III."

Then there followed a banquet, and toasts were offered. Bonaparte gave the first.

"To the brave Stengel, La Harpe, and Dubois, who died on the field of honor! May their shades watch over us and preserve us from the snares of our enemies!"

Masséna proposed a toast to the re-emigration of the emigrés.

Augereau, who was to start the next day with full authority from Bonaparte, raised his glass and said:

"To the union of all French Republicans! To the destruction of the Clichy Club! Let the conspirators tremble! From the Adige and the Rhine to the Seine is but a step. Let them tremble! Their iniquities are known, and the price is at the end of our bayonets!"

As he uttered the last words, trumpets and drums sounded the charge. Each soldier sprang to his gun, as if he were obliged to start on the instant; and the men could scarcely be induced to resume their places at the tables.

The members of the Directory received Bonaparte's message with widely varying emotions.

Augereau exactly suited Barras, who, always ready to mount his horse and summon the Jacobins and the people of the faubourgs to his assistance, considered him the man for the situation. Rewbell and La Reveillière, whose characters were cool and evenly balanced, wanted a general who was as cool and as evenly balanced as themselves. As for Carnot and Barthélemy, it is needless to say that Augereau could in no wise accord with their plans.

Indeed, Augereau, such as we know him, was a dangerous auxiliary. A brave man, an excellent soldier, with an intrepid heart, but a boasting Gascon tongue, Augereau

revealed too clearly the object of his mission. But Rewbell and Le Reveillière succeeded in taking him aside and convincing him that it was necessary to save the Republic by an energetic and decisive blow, but without bloodshed. In order to keep him quiet, they gave him command of the seventeenth military division, which included Paris.

This was the 16th Fructidor.

The relations between the two parties were so strained that a *coup d'état* was expected at every moment, either on the part of the directors or the councils.

Pichegru was the natural chief of the royalist movement; if he were to take the initiative, the royalists would gather round him.

This book which we are writing is far from being a romance—perhaps, indeed, it is not enough of a romance to suit some of our readers; but we have already said that it was written along the shores of history from promontory to promontory. And just as we were the first to throw broad daylight upon the events of the 13th Vendémiaire and the part which Bonaparte played in it, so shall we, at this period which we have reached, show the over-calumniated Pichegru in his true light.

Pichegru, after his refusal to listen to the Prince de Condé—a refusal the causes of which we have already narrated—entered into direct negotiations with the Comte de Provence, who, since the death of the Dauphin, had assumed the title of King Louis XVIII.

Now, when Louis XVIII. sent Cadoudal his commission as *king's lieutenant*, and the red ribbon, he sent Pichegru at the same time (to show his appreciation of his disinterestedness, in that he had refused to accept honors and money, and would not attempt to bring about the restoration save for the glory of being a second Monk without the Duchy of Albemarle) the following letter:

I have long desired to express to you, sir, the feelings which you early awakened in me and the esteem which I

have for your person. I yield now to the imperious demands of my heart when I say to you that for the last eighteen months it has seemed to me that the honor of restoring the French monarchy was reserved for you.

I will not speak to you of the admiration which I feel for your talents and for the noble deeds which you have performed. History has already placed you in the ranks of the great generals, and posterity will confirm the verdict of all Europe in regard to your victories and your virtues.

The most distinguished leaders have, for the most part, owed their victories to long experience in their professions; but from the first you were what you have never ceased to be throughout all your campaigns. You have united the bravery of Marshal Saxe to the disinterestedness of Monsieur de Turenne and the modesty of Monsieur de Catinat. And I may say that your name is indissolubly associated in my mind with those names which have made our annals great and glorious.

I confirm, sir, the full powers which M. de Condé bestowed upon you. I put no limit upon them, and leave you entirely free to do anything you may think necessary for my service which is compatible with the dignity of my crown and in accord with the interests of the kingdom.

You know, sir, what are my sentiments toward you. They will never change. LOUIS.

A second letter followed the first. The two together furnish an exact measure of Louis XVIII.'s feelings toward Pichegru, and should influence not only his contemporaries but posterity as well.

You are aware, sir, of the unfortunate events which have taken place in Italy. The necessity of sending thirty thousand men there has forced an indefinite postponement of the project of crossing the Rhine. Your attachment to me will enable you readily to understand my chagrin at this unfortunate adverse stroke of Fate, especially just as I saw the gates of my kingdom opening before me. On the other hand, these disasters increase, if that were possible, the respect and confidence with which you have inspired me. I am sure that you will re-establish the French monarchy; and whether the war continues, or whether we have peace this summer, I count upon you for the success of the great

work. I place in your hands, sir, absolute power to act for me and in my name. Make such use of it as you think necessary for my service.

If the valuable sources of information which you have at your command in Paris and the provinces; if your talents, and, above all, your character, could permit me to fear an event which might oblige you to leave the kingdom, you would find your place between Monsieur de Condé and myself. In speaking thus to you, I have a heartfelt desire to prove to you my esteem and attachment. LOUIS.

Therefore, on the one hand, Augereau was urging matters to a climax with letters from Bonaparte; and, on the other, Pichegru was being urged to action with letters from Louis XVIII.

The news that Augereau had been given command of the seventeenth military division—that is to say, that he had been placed at the head of the forces in Paris—impressed the royalists with the fact that they had no time to lose. Therefore, Pichegru, Barbé-Marbois, Dumas, Murinais, Delarue, Rovère, Aubry, Laffon-Ladébat—the whole royalist party, in short, assembled at Adjutant-General Ramel's house, the latter being commander of the guard of the Corps Legislatif.

This Ramel was a brave soldier, and had been adjutant-general of the Army of the Rhine under the orders of General Desaix, when, in January, 1797, he had received orders from the Directory to return to Paris and take command of the guard of the Corps Legislatif. This corps was composed of a battalion of six hundred men, most of whom had been selected from the grenadiers of the Convention, whom we saw marching so bravely to the charge, under the command of Bonaparte, on the 13th Vendémiaire.

At this meeting Pichegru clearly explained the situation. Ramel sided entirely with the two councils, and was ready to obey any orders which the two presidents might give him. Pichegru proposed that they should take command that very evening of two hundred men and arrest Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière, and make charges

against them the next day. Unfortunately, they had agreed to abide by the decision of the majority. The temporizers opposed Pichegru's motion.

"The Constitution will be all-sufficient to defend us," said Lacuée.

"The Constitution can do nothing against cannon; and they will reply to your decrees with cannon," replied Villot.

"The soldiers will not be with them," persisted Lacuée.

"The soldiers will follow those who command them," said Pichegru. "You will not decide, and you will be lost. As for me," he continued, sadly, "I sacrificed my life long ago. I am tired of all these discussions which come to naught. When you need me you can come for me."

And with these words he went away. At the very moment when Pichegru left Ramel's house, sad and depressed, a post-chaise drew up before the Luxembourg, and citizen-general Moreau was announced to Barras.

CHAPTER XXIX

JEAN-VICTOR MOREAU

MOREAU was about this time a man thirty-seven years of age, and, with Hoche, the only man who could dispute with Bonaparte—in reputation at least, if not in fortune.

He had at this time just joined an association, which later became a conspiracy, which lasted from 1797 to 1809, when it became extinct at the death of General Oudot, the head of the society, which was called the Philadelphiles. In this society he was known as Fabius, in memory of the famous Roman general who conquered Hannibal by temporizing.

Therefore Moreau was known as the Temporizer.

Unfortunately, temporizing was not with him the result

of calculation nor the effect of character. Moreau was absolutely lacking in firmness in politics and strength of will. Had he been gifted with more instinctive force, he might have had a greater influence upon events in France, and have traced out for himself a career comparable with the most glorious careers of modern or ancient times.

Moreau was born at Morlaix in Brittany. His father was a distinguished lawyer. His family was of high standing, and rich rather than poor. At eighteen years of age, being attracted toward the military profession, he enlisted. His father, who wished him to become a lawyer like himself, bought young Moreau's discharge, and sent him to Rennes to study law. He soon acquired considerable influence over his companions, which was undoubtedly due to his moral superiority. Inferior in intellect to Bonaparte, and inferior in rapidity of thought to Hoche, he was nevertheless superior to most men.

When the troubles which were the precursors of the Revolution burst out in Brittany, Moreau sided with the parliament against the court, and carried with him the whole body of students. Then followed between Moreau, who was thenceforth called the parliamentary general, and the commandant of Rennes a struggle in which the old soldier did not always have the advantage. The commandant at Rennes finally gave orders for Moreau's arrest.

But Moreau, who possessed as a part of his genius the quality of prudence, found means to evade the search, showing himself every day, now at one point, now at another, so that the people should be convinced that the spirit of parliamentary opposition had not departed from the old capital of Amorica.

But later, seeing that this parliament which he was defending opposed the convocation of the States-General, and considering that such a convocation was necessary for the future welfare of France, he changed sides, while still holding the same opinions, supported the convocation of the states-general, and appeared at the head of all the mobs

which were thereafter organized in Brittany. He was president of the Breton youths gathered at Pontivy when the procureur-general, desiring to utilize the talents which he was revealing, made him commander of the first brigade of volunteers from Ille-et-Vilaine.

Here is what Moreau says of himself:

> I was destined to the study of the law at the beginning of this revolution which was to burst the bonds of the French people. It changed the whole course of my life; I devoted it to the profession of arms. I did not take my place among the soldiers of liberty through ambition, but I entered upon a military career out of respect for the rights of the nation: I became a warrior because I was a citizen.

To his calm and slightly lymphatic nature, Moreau owed a sure insight in times of danger and a coolness which were astonishing in so young a man. Men were still lacking at this time, although they were soon to swarm forward in crowds. His qualities, though of a negative order, procured for Moreau the rank of brigadier-general in the army of which Pichegru was then commander-in-chief. Pichegru, the man of genius, appreciated Moreau, the man of talent, and conferred on him, in 1794, the rank of general of division. From that time he had command of twenty-five thousand men, and was most frequently intrusted with the conduct of siege operations. In the brilliant campaign of 1794, which subdued Holland, Moreau commanded the right wing of the army. The conquest of Holland had been deemed impossible by all strategists, Holland being, as is well known, a land that lies lower than the sea, which was wrested from the seas, and which can be flooded at will.

The Hollanders risked this semi-suicide. They pierced the dikes which held back the seas, and thought to escape invasion by inundating their country. But cold weather fell suddenly, of a severity unknown in the country, in which the mercury fell to fifteen degrees, and which had not been seen there more than once in a century, and froze the canals and the rivers.

Then, with a daring which is peculiar to them, the French ventured out upon the deep. The infantry risked the passage first, then the cavalry, and, finally, the light artillery. Seeing that the ice bore this unaccustomed weight bravely, they ventured upon it with the heavy pieces of field-artillery. They fought on ice as they were in the habit of fighting on dry land. The English were attacked and driven back with the bayonet. The Austrian batteries were captured. That which should have saved Holland was its destruction. The cold which later became the mortal enemy of the Empire was now the faithful ally of the Republic.

After this there was nothing further to hinder the invasion of the United Provinces. The ramparts could no longer defend the town, for they were on a level with the ice. Arnheim, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and the Hague were taken. The conquest of Over-Yssel, Gröningen and Friesland finished the subjugation of Holland.

There remained the Stadtholder's fleet, which was frozen in the ice of the Straits of Texel, the different vessels of which were near the margin of the water. Moreau brought his cannon to bear upon the artillery of the fleet. He fought the vessels as he would have attacked a fortress, sending a regiment of hussars to board it; and the fleet was captured by a regiment of artillery and light cavalry—a thing unheard-of in the annals of nations or in naval history.

These were the achievements which had caused Pichegru and Moreau to grow in stature; but Moreau remained merely the clever lieutenant of the man of genius.

Meanwhile, Pichegru was given the command of the Army of the Moselle and the Rhine, and Moreau that of the Army of the North.

Before long, as we have said, Pichegru fell under suspicion and was recalled to Paris, and Moreau succeeded to his command of the Army of the Rhine and the Moselle.

At the beginning of the campaign, some skirmishers captured a wagon which formed part of the equipage of

the Austrian General Klinglin. In a little chest which was forwarded to Moreau, the latter discovered the whole correspondence between Fauché-Borel and the Prince de Condé. This correspondence gave a full and detailed account of the relations which had obtained between Fauché-Borel and Pichegru when the former had posed as a travelling wine-merchant.

In this matter every one is free to judge Moreau according to his own way of thinking and his own conscience.

Ought Moreau—the friend, the debtor, the lieutenant of Pichegru—simply to have examined the contents of the chest and then have sent it to his former chief, with the simple recommendation "Take care!" or ought he, putting his country before his affections, the Stoic before the friend, to have done what he did; that is to say, spend six months in deciphering, or having deciphered, all the letters which were in cipher, and then, with his suspicions verified, but with Pichegru's guilt unproved, take advantage of the preliminaries of the treaty of Léoben, and when the tempest was ready to burst over Pichegru's head, go to Barras and say: "Behold me, I am the thunderbolt!"

Now that was what Moreau had come to say to Barras. Just such proofs as these, not of complicity, but of negotiations, were what the Directory needed to accuse Pichegru, and these proofs Moreau supplied.

Barras was closeted alone with Moreau for two hours, satisfying himself that he held weapons that were the more deadly because they were poisoned. Then, when convinced that there were grounds, if not for condemnation, at least for trial, he rang An usher entered.

"Go," said Barras, "bid the minister of police, and my two colleagues, Rewbell and La Reveillière come hither. Then, looking at his watch, he said: "Ten o'clock of the evening; we still have six hours before us. Citizen-general, you have come in time." Then holding out his hand to Moreau, he added, with his inscrutable smile: "We will reward you for this."

Moreau asked permission to withdraw and it was granted. He would have embarrassed Barras quite as much as Barras would have embarrassed him.

The three directors remained in consultation until three o'clock in the morning. The commissioner of police joined them at once, and they sent him for Merlin (of Douai) and Augereau, one after the other. Then about three o'clock in the morning they sent an address to the government printer which was couched in the following terms:

The Directory, attacked about two o'clock in the morning by the troops of the two councils under General Ramel, was obliged to meet force with force.

After about an hour's fighting, the troops of the two councils were defeated, and the government remained victorious.

More than a hundred prisoners remained in the hands of the directors; to-morrow a list of their names will be given, together with a more ample list of their conspiracies, which have almost succeeded in overturning the established power.

18th Fructidor, four A.M.

This curious production was signed by Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux. Sothin, the minister of police, had suggested it and had drawn it up.

"They will not believe in your placard," said Barras, shrugging his shoulders.

"They will believe in it to-morrow," replied Sothin, "and that is all we need. It does not matter what they believe the day after; the trick will be turned then."

The directors separated, giving orders to arrest first of all their two colleagues, Carnot and Barthélemy.

CHAPTER XXX

THE EIGHTEENTH FRUCTIDOR

WHILE Sothin, the minister of police, was drawing up his placards, and proposing to have Carnot and forty-two deputies shot—while the directors were annulling the appointment of Barthélemy, the fifth director, and promising his place to Augereau if they had reason to be satisfied with him when the evening of the next day arrived—two men were quietly playing backgammon in a corner of the Luxembourg.

One of these two men, the younger by two years only, had begun as an officer of engineers, and had published mathematical essays which had won him admittance into several societies of learning. He had also composed a eulogy on Vauban which had been crowned by the Academy of Dijon.

At the dawn of the Revolution he was a captain of engineers, and had been appointed Chevalier of Saint-Louis. In 1791 the department of the Pas-de-Calais had elected him deputy to the Legislative Assembly. His first speech there had been directed against the emigré princes at Coblentz, against the Marquis de Mirabeau, against Cardinal de Rohan, and against Monsieur de Calonne, who was intriguing with foreign kings to induce them to declare war upon France. He proposed that non-commissioned officers and sergeants should take the place of the officers belonging to the nobility who had emigrated. In 1792, he asked for the demolition of all the bastilles in the interior of France, and presented measures to abolish the passive obedience which had formerly been exacted from officers and soldiers.

In the days when the Revolution had been threatened by foreign powers, he had asked to have three hundred

thousand pikes manufactured to arm the people of Paris. Elected a deputy to the National Assembly, he had unhesitatingly voted the death of the king. He had furthered the acquirement of the principality of Monaco and a part of Belgium by France.

Sent to the Army of the North in 1793, he had degraded General Gratien from his rank upon the field of battle, because he fell back before the enemy, and placing himself at the head of the French column, he won back the ground that had been lost.

In the month of August of the same year he had been chosen a member of the Committee of Public Safety, and, in that position, displayed an extraordinary talent which has become proverbial, by organizing fourteen armies and formulating plans of campaign, not only for each army by itself, but for operations including them all. It was at that time that the French armies won that astonishing series of victories, from the recovery of Toulon to the surrender of the four strongholds in the North.

This man was Lazare-Nicholas-Marguerite Carnot, the fourth director, who, not having been able to agree with Barras, Rewbell, and La Reveillière-Lepaux, had just been condemned to death by them, being thought too dangerous to be allowed to live. His partner, who was shaking the dice with a nonchalance equal to Carnot's energy, was the Marquis François Barthélemy, the last of the directors to be appointed, who had no other merit than that of being the nephew of the Abbé Barthélemy, the author of the "Voyage du jeune Anarcharsis."

As minister from France to Switzerland during the Revolution, he had concluded at Basel two years before the time of which we are now speaking, the treaties of peace with Prussia and Spain, which had put an end to the first coalition. He had been chosen because of the well-known moderation of his opinions; and it was this very moderation which had justly led to his dismissal by his colleagues, and was later to lead to his incarceration.

It was one o'clock when Carnot, by a brilliant play, ended the sixth game of backgammon. The two friends shook hands at parting.

"Au revoir," said Carnot to Barthélemy.

"Au revoir," replied Barthélemy. "Are you sure, my dear colleague? In these times I am never sure when I leave a friend at night that I shall meet him again in the morning."

"What the deuce do you fear?" asked Carnot.

"Hum!" said Barthélemy, "a stroke of the dagger is soon given."

"Nonsense!" said Carnot, "you need not worry about that. You are too goodnatured for them to think of fearing you. They will treat you as one of the do-nothing kings; you will be shaved and shut up in a cloister."

"But then, if you fear that," said Barthélemy, "why do you prefer defeat to victory? For, after the propositions which have been made us, it depends solely on ourselves whether we overthrow our three colleagues or not."

"My dear friend," said Carnot, "you cannot see beyond your nose, which is unfortunately not as long as that of your uncle. Who are the men who have made us these propositions? The royalists. Now do you think the royalists would ever pardon me for the part I have taken against them? It is only a choice of deaths; with the royalists I shall be hanged as a regicide, with the directors I shall be assassinated as a royalist. I would rather be assassinated."

"And with these ideas you can go willingly to bed in your own rooms?" said Barthélemy.

"Where should I go to bed?"

"In some place, no matter where, where you would be safe."

"I am a fatalist; if the dagger is to strike me, it will find me. Good-night, Barthélemy! My conscience is clear; I voted the death of the king, but I saved France. It is for France to take care of me."

And Carnot went to bed as composedly as he always did.

He was not mistaken. A German had received the order to arrest him, and, if he made the least resistance, to assassinate him. At three o'clock in the morning the German and his satellites presented themselves at the door of Carnot's apartments, which he shared with a younger brother.

Carnot's servant, when he saw the men, and heard their leader ask in bad French where citizen Carnot was, took them to his brother, and he, having nothing to fear for himself, left them in error at first.

Then the valet ran to warn his master that they had come to arrest him. Carnot, almost naked, escaped through one of the gates of the Luxembourg garden to which he had the key. Then the servant came back. The brother, when he saw him, knew that the other had escaped, and he made himself known. The soldiers in a rage ran through the apartment, but they found only Carnot's empty bed, which was still warm.

Once in the garden of the Luxembourg, the fugitive paused, not knowing where to go. He finally went to a lodging-house in the Rue de l'Enfer, but was told that there was not a vacant room in the house. He set off again, seeking shelter at random, when suddenly the alarm-guns went off. At the sound several doors and windows were opened. What would become of him, half naked as he was? He would certainly be arrested by the first patrol, and troops were marching toward the Luxembourg from all directions.

While he was deliberating, a patrol appeared at the corner of the Rue de la Vieille-Comédie. A porter half-opened his door and Carnot sprang inside. Chance willed that the porter should be a worthy man who kept him concealed until he had time to prepare another hiding-place.

As for Barthélemy, although Barras had twice sent him warning during the day of the fate that awaited him, he took no precautions. He was arrested in his bed an hour after he had left Carnot. He made no resistance, and did

not even ask to see the warrant, and the words "Oh, my country!" were the only ones he uttered.

His servant, Letellier, who had been with him for twenty years, asked to be arrested with him. This singular favor was refused. We shall see how he obtained it later.

The two councils named a committee which was to sit permanently. The president of the committee was named Siméon. He had not yet arrived when the alarm guns sounded.

Pichegru had passed the night with this committee, together with those of the conspiracy who were determined to meet force with force; but none thought the moment when the Directory would dare attempt its *coup d'etat* was so near at hand. Several members of the committee were armed, among them Rovere and Villot, who, learning suddenly that they were surrounded, volunteered to go out, pistol in hand. But this Pichegru opposed.

"Our other colleagues assembled here are not armed," he said; "they would be massacred by those wretches, who are only waiting for an opportunity. Do not let us desert them."

Just then the door of the room occupied by the committee opened and a member of the councils, named Delarue, rushed in.

"Ah, my dear Delarue!" exclaimed Pichegru, "what on earth have you come for? We are all going to be arrested."

"Very well; then we will be arrested together," answered Delarue, calmly.

And indeed, in order that he might share the same fate as his comrades, Delarue had had the courage to force his way three times past the guard in order to reach the committee room. He had been warned at his own house of the danger he ran, but he had refused to escape, although it would have been easy for him; and, having kissed his wife and children without waking them, he had come, as we have seen, to join his colleagues.

We have said in a preceding chapter that Pichegru, when he had offered to bring the directors bound to the bar of the Corps Legislatif, if they would give him two hundred men, had not been able to obtain them. They were now eager to defend themselves, but it was too late.

Delarue had scarcely exchanged these few words with Pichegru when the door was burst open, and a crowd of soldiers, led by Augereau, entered. Augereau, finding himself near Pichegru, put out his hand to seize him. Delarue drew a pistol from his pocket, and attempted to fire upon Augereau, but on the instant a bayonet was thrust through his arm.

"I arrest you!" cried Augereau, seizing Pichegru.

"Wretch!" exclaimed the latter, "all you needed was to become a minion of Barras."

"Soldiers," cried a member of the committee, "will you dare lay hands upon Pichegru, your general?"

Without a word, Augereau flung himself upon him, and, with the assistance of four soldiers, succeeded, after a violent struggle, in securing his arms and binding them behind his back.

With Pichegru arrested, the conspiracy had no longer a head, and no one attempted further resistance.

General Mathieu Dumas, the same man who was Minister of War at Naples under Joseph Bonaparte, and has left such interesting memoirs, was with the committee when it was surrounded. He wore the uniform of a general. He left through the door by which Augereau had entered and went downstairs.

In the vestibule he was confronted by a soldier, who thrust a bayonet in his face and said, "No one is allowed to go out."

"I know it," said he, "for it was I who just gave the order."

"I beg your pardon, general," said the soldier, lowering his weapon.

And the general passed out without further hinder-

ance. He was obliged to leave Paris in order to insure his safety.

Mathieu Dumas summoned his two aides-de-camp, ordered them to mount their horses, galloped to the barrier, gave his orders to the guard, and passed outside the walls, to go, as he said, to another post, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE TEMPLE

THIS is what had happened.

When a great event takes place like the 13th Vendémiaire, or the 18th Fructidor, it stamps an indelible date upon the book of history. Everybody knows this date; and so when the words "13th Vendémiaire" or "18th Fructidor" are pronounced, everybody knows the results which followed the great events commemorated by these dates, but very few know the secret springs which prepared the way for the accomplishment of these events.

As a result, we have particularly assumed the duty in our historical novels, or romanticized histories, of telling things which no one has told before, and of relating matters which we know, but of which very few persons share that knowledge with us.

Since friendly indiscretion has revealed the source from which we have obtained the priceless volumes and original and rare manuscripts from which we have drawn, this is the proper place for us to acknowledge our indebtedness for the communication of these interesting volumes which it is so hard to coax down from their shelves. They have been for us the beacon which has guided us through the 13th Vendémiaire; and we have only to light it again to penetrate the mazes of the 18th Fructidor.

It is, then, with the certainty of telling the truth, the

whole truth, and nothing but the truth, that we repeat the phrase with which this chapter begins: This is what had happened.

On the evening of the 17th, Adjutant-general Ramel, after he had visited his posts, went to take his orders from the committee, who were to remain in session during the night. He was present when Pichegru, as we have said, having been prevented by his colleagues from taking the initiative, had predicted what would happen, and with his habitual indifference, although he might have fled, and thus have escaped the persecution which he had foreseen, had allowed himself to drift along with the current of his destiny.

When Pichegru had gone, the other deputies became more firmly convinced that the Directory would not dare to attempt anything against them, and if they did, it would not fall at once, and that therefore for several days they were safe. Even before his departure, Pichegru heard several of the deputies, among them Eméry, Mathieu Dumas, Vaublanc, Tronçon de Coudray and Thibaudeau, indignantly denounce this supposition, and decry the terror with which it had inspired the public.

Adjutant-general Ramel was therefore dismissed without further orders; he was merely instructed to do that day what he had done the day before, and what he would do on the morrow. Consequently he returned to his quarters and contented himself with ascertaining that, in case of alarm, his grenadiers were ready to take up arms. Two hours later, at one in the morning, he received orders from the minister of war to report to him.

He hastened to the hall, which was empty save for one solitary inspector, named Rovère, who was asleep. He told him of the order which he had received, and begged him to note its importance at that hour of the night. Ramel added that he had been notified that several columns of troops were entering Paris. But all these threatening probabilities had no effect upon Rovère, who declared that he was very comfortable where he was, and had excellent reasons

for remaining so. Ramel, when he left the hall, met the commander of the cavalry post whose duty it was, like his own, to guard the councils. The latter announced that he had withdrawn his pickets, and ordered his troops, as well as the two cannon which were in the courtyard of the Tuileries, to cross the bridges.

"How could you do such a thing, when I told you to do just the contrary?" asked Ramel.

"General, it was not my fault," replied the commander; "the commander-in-chief, Augereau, gave the order, and the cavalry officer refused positively to obey yours."

Ramel went back and again begged Rovère to warn his colleague, telling him what had occurred since he had seen him. But Rovère was obstinate in his confidence, and replied that all these movements of troops signified absolutely nothing; that he had known of them before, and that several corps of troops were to go upon the bridges at an early hour to manœuvre. Ramel might therefore be perfectly easy, for Rovère's source of information was reliable, and he could count upon it; and Ramel could obey the order of the minister of war without any hesitation.

But a dread of being separated from his corps prevented Ramel from obeying. He went home, but instead of going to bed remained ready dressed and armed.

At three o'clock in the morning a former member of the bodyguard with whom he had been very intimate in the Army of the Pyrenees, named Poinçot, announced himself as a messenger from General Lemoine, and handed Ramel a note couched in the following terms:

General Lemoine, in the name of the Directory, summons the commander of the grenadiers of the Corps Legislatif to give passage across the swing-bridge to a body of fifteen hundred men charged with executing the government's orders.

"I am surprised," said Ramel, "that an old comrade, who should know me better, could consent to bring me an order which I cannot obey without dishonoring myself."

"Do as you please," replied Poinçot; "but I warn you that all resistance will be useless. Eight hundred of your grenadiers have already been covered by four cannon."

"I receive no orders save from the Corps Legislatif," exclaimed Ramel.

And hastening from his house he started on a run to the Tuileries. An alarm-gun sounded so near him that he thought it was a signal for attack. On his way he met two of his chiefs of battalion, Ponsard and Fléchard, both excellent officers in whom he had every confidence.

He hastened to the committee-room again, where he found Generals Pichegru and Villot. He at once sent notices to General Mathieu Dumas and the presidents of the two Councils, Laffon-Ladebat, president of the Council of the Ancients, and Siméon, president of the Five Hundred. He also went to warn the deputies whose lodgings were known to him to be near the Tuileries.

At that moment, they having forced the iron gates of the swing-bridge, the divisions of Augereau and Lemoine were enabled to unite. The soldiers of the two armies filled the garden; a battery was directed against the Hall of the Ancients, all the avenues were closed, and all the posts doubled and covered by superior forces.

We have told how the door opened, how a throng of soldiers entered the hall of the committee, with Augereau at its head, and how, when no one else had dared lay a hand on Pichegru, Augereau himself had committed that sacrilege, and had thrown down and bound the man who had been his general; and finally how, after Pichegru was mastered, the other deputies offered no further resistance, and the order was given to take the prisoners to the Temple.

The three directors were waiting, together with the minister of police, who, once his placards were posted, had returned to them. The minister of police advised that the prisoners should be instantly shot in the courtyard of the Luxembourg under pretext that they had been taken with arms in their hands. Rewbell agreed with him;

the gentle La Reveillière-Lepaux, the man of peace, who had always advised merciful measures, was ready to give the fatal order, saying, like Cicero of Lentullus and Cethegus: "They have lived!"

Barras alone, it is but justice to say, opposed this measure with all his might, saying that, unless they put him in prison during the execution, he should throw himself between the bullets and the prisoners. Finally a deputy named Guillemardet, who had made himself a friend of the directors by joining their faction, proposed that the prisoners be banished to Cayenne "to be done with it." This amendment was put to the vote and enthusiastically carried.

The minister of police considered it his duty to conduct Barthélemy personally to the Temple. We have said that his servant Letellier asked to be permitted to accompany him. They refused at first, but finally granted his request.

"Who is this man?" asked Augereau, who did not recognize him as one of the exiles.

"He is my friend," said Barthélemy; "he asked to be allowed to follow me, and—"

"Pooh!" said Augereau, interrupting him, "when he knows where you are going he will not be so eager."

"I beg your pardon, citizen-general," replied Letellier, "but wherever my master goes I will follow him."

"Even to the scaffold?" asked Augereau.

"Above all, to the scaffold," replied the man.

By dint of entreaties and prayers the doors of the prison were opened to the wives of the prisoners. Every step they took in the courtyard, where a queen of France had suffered so bitterly, was fresh agony to them. Drunken soldiers insulted them at every turn.

"Are you coming to see those beggars?" they asked, pointing to the prisoners. "Make haste and say farewell to them to-day, for they will be shot to-morrow."

As we have already said, Pichegru was not married. When he came to Paris he did not wish to supplant poor Rose, for whom, as we have said, he had bought a cotton

umbrella from his savings, which had delighted her much. When he saw his colleagues' wives, he approached them, and took Delarue's little son, who was crying, in his arms.

"Why are you crying so, my child?" he asked with tears in his own eyes as he kissed him.

"Because," replied the child, "wicked soldiers have arrested my papa."

"You are right, poor little fellow," replied Pichegru, darting a look of scorn at those who were watching him, "they are wicked soldiers. Good soldiers would not allow themselves to be turned into executioners."

Augereau wrote Bonaparte that same day as follows:

At last, general, my mission is accomplished; the promises of the Army of Italy were fulfilled last night.

The Directory determined upon a bold stroke; the moment for its accomplishment was still undecided, and the preparations were still incomplete, when the fear of being forestalled precipitated matters. At midnight I sent orders to the troops to march upon given points. Before daybreak all those points and all the principal squares were filled with artillery; at daybreak the halls of the councils were surrounded, the guards of the Directory fraternized with our troops, and the members whose name I send you were arrested and taken to the Temple.

A large number are being pursued; Carnot has disappeared. Paris is calm, marvelling at a crisis which should have been terrible, but which passed off like a holiday. The robust patriot of the faubourgs proclaims the safety of the Republic, and the black collars are downcast.

Now, it is for the wise energy of the Directory and the two councils to do the rest. The place of sessions is changed and the first proceedings promise well. This event has taken us a long stride toward peace; it is for you to cross the intervening space which still separates us from it.

Do not forget the bill of exchange for twenty-five thousand francs; it is urgent. AUGEREAU.

Then followed the list, containing seventy-four names.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE EXILES

THE Temple suggested associations which were not entirely without remorse for the political consciences of those who had been taken there.

Some of them, after they had sent Louis XVI. to the Temple, that is to say, after they had closed the prison doors upon him, had opened them again only to send him to the scaffold, which means that several of the prisoners were regicides.

Accorded their liberty in the interior of the prison, they rallied around Pichegru, as being the most eminent personality among them. Pichegru, who had nothing to reproach himself with as far as Louis XVI. was concerned, and who, on the contrary, was being punished for the too great pity which he had evinced for the Bourbons—Pichegru, the archeologist, historian, and man of letters, placed himself at the head of the group who asked permission to visit the apartments of the tower.

Lavilleheurnois, former Master of Requests under Louis XVI., secret agent of the Bourbons during the Revolution, and a participant with Brotier-Deprêle in a conspiracy against the Republic, acted as their guide.

"Here is the chamber of the unfortunate Louis XVI.," he said, opening the door of the apartment in which the august prisoner had been confined.

Rovère, the same to whom Ramel had applied, and who had told him that there was nothing to fear from the concentrated movement of the troops—Rovère, the former lieutenant of Jourdan Coupe-Tête, who had apologized to the Assembly for the massacre at the Glacière, could not support this sight, and withdrew, striking his forehead with his hands as he went.

Pichegru, now as calm as though he had been again with the Army of the Rhine, deciphered the inscriptions which were written in pencil on the woodwork and scratched with a diamond on the window pane. He read this one:

"O God! pardon those who have killed my parents!
O my brother, watch over me from heaven!
May the French be happy!"

There could be no doubt as to who had traced those words, but he wished to assure himself of the truth. Lavilleheurnois asserted that he recognized the handwriting of Madame Royale; but Pichegru sent for the porter, who assured him that it was indeed the august daughter of Louis XVI. who had written these lines, so replete with Christian spirit. Then he added: "Gentlemen, I beg of you not to efface those lines so long as I am here. I have vowed that no one shall touch them."

"Very well, my friend," said Pichegru; "you are a worthy man." And while the other spoke, Delarue wrote beneath the words: "May the French be happy!"

"Heaven will hear the prayers of the innocent."

Meanwhile, although they were separated from the world, the prisoners had the satisfaction of learning upon several occasions that they were not forgotten.

On the very evening of the 18th Fructidor, as the wife of one of the prisoners was leaving the prison, she was accosted by a man she did not know.

"Madame," said he, "you are doubtless connected with one of the unfortunate men who were arrested this morning."

"Alas! yes, sir," she replied.

"Well, then, permit me to send him, whoever he may be, this slight loan, which he can repay in better times." And so saying, he put three rolls of louis in her hand.

An old man whom Madame Laffon-Ladébat did not know came to her house on the 19th Fructidor.

"Madame," he said, "I feel for your husband all the esteem and the friendship which he deserves. Be good enough

to give him these fifty louis. I regret exceedingly that I have only this small sum at present to offer him." And then, noting her hesitation and divining its cause, he added: "Madame, your delicacy need not suffer. I am only lending this money to your husband; he can repay me when he returns."

Almost all the men who were condemned to exile had occupied the foremost offices of the government for a long time, and it is a remarkable fact that on the 18th Fructidor, when they were about to be exiled, they were all poor.

Pichegru, the poorest of all, when he learned that he was not to be shot, as he had at first supposed, but only exiled, was much disturbed about his brother and sister, whose sole support he had always been. As for poor Rose, we know that she was able to support herself with her needle, and was richer than any of them. Had she known of the trouble which had befallen her friend, she would surely have hastened to him from Besançon and opened her purse to him.

That which most disturbed the man who had saved France on the Rhine and who had conquered Holland, the richest of all the provinces; who had handled millions, and refused to sell himself for millions; was not married, and was accused of having received a million in money, of having exacted a promise of the principality of Arbois, with two hundred thousand livres' income and reversion to his wife and children, and the château of Chambord, with twelve cannon which he had captured from the enemy—that which most disturbed this man, who had no wife or children, who had given himself for nothing when he might have sold himself for a great price, was a debt of six hundred francs, which he had not paid.

He sent for his brother and sister and said to the latter: "You will find at my lodgings the hat, coat and sword which I wore when I conquered Holland. Put them up for sale with the inscription, 'The hat, coat and sword of Pichegru, who has been exiled to Cayenne.' "

His sister did as he bade her, and the following day she came and told him that a pious hand had paid her the six hundred francs and that the debt was cancelled.

Barthélemy, one of the most prominent men of the time, politically speaking, since he had negotiated the treaties with Prussia and Spain, the first which the Republic had ever signed, and who could have compelled each of these powers to have given him a million, had for sole property a farm which brought him in an annual income of eight hundred livres.

Villot, at the time of his arrest, possessed only one thousand francs. A week before he had lent them to a man who called himself his friend, but who failed to return them before his departure.

Laffon-Ladébat, who, since the proclamation of the Republic, had neglected his own interests for those of his country, and who had once possessed an immense fortune, could scarcely get together five hundred francs when he learned of his condemnation. His children, upon whom had devolved the duty of paying his creditors, did so only to find themselves thereafter in penury.

Delarue supported his old father and all his family. Rich before the Revolution, but ruined by it, he owed the help which he received at his departure to friends. His father, an old man of sixty-nine, was inconsolable, but grief could not kill him. He lived in the hope of seeing his son again some day.

Three months later he was told that an officer of the navy, who had just arrived in Paris, had met Delarue in the deserts of Guiana. He at once wished to see and talk with him. The officer's story was of interest to the whole family, and they were all assembled to meet him. The officer entered. Delarue's father rose to go and meet him; but just as he was about to throw his arms around his neck, joy killed him, and he fell dead at the feet of the man who said: "I have seen your son."

As for Tronçon de Coudray, who had nothing but his

salary to live on, he was deprived of all his offices when he was arrested, and went away with two louis for his entire fortune.

Perhaps I am wrong, but it seems to me, since the historians neglect this duty, that it is well for the novelist to follow in the wake of revolutions and *coups d'état*, and teach men that it is not always those men to whom statues are erected who are most worthy of respect and admiration.

Augereau, after having been charged with the arrests, was appointed to watch the prisoners. He gave them for their immediate keeper a man who had been, until within a month, at the galleys at Toulon, where he had been sent after a trial by court-martial, for theft, murder, and incendiarism, committed in the Vendée.

The prisoners remained at the Temple from the morning of the 18th Fructidor until the evening of the 21st. At midnight the jailer woke them, telling them that they were to start, and that they had a quarter of an hour in which to get ready. Pichegru, who still preserved the habit of sleeping with his clothes on, was ready first, and went from room to room to hasten his comrades. He went down first, and found ex-director Barthélemy between General Augereau and minister of the police Sothin, who had brought him to the Temple in his own carriage. Sothin had treated him well, and as Barthélemy thanked him, the minister replied: "We know what revolutions are. Your turn to-day, ours, perhaps, to-morrow."

When Barthélemy, anxious about the country rather than about his own affairs, asked if no harm had resulted from it and if the public peace had not been disturbed.

"No," replied the minister; "the people swallowed the pill; and, as the dose was a good one, they took it without any trouble." Then, seeing all the exiles at the foot of the tower, he added: "Gentlemen, I wish you a pleasant journey."

Then getting into his carriage he drove away.

Augereau ordered the roll of the prisoners to be read.

As they were named, a guard led them to the carriages past a file of soldiers who insulted them as they went along. Some of those men—miserable river bastards always ready to insult those who were down—tried to reach across the others in order to strike the exiles in the face, to tear their clothing, or to bespatter them with mud.

"Why do you let them go?" they cried. "You promised us that they should be shot."

"My dear *general*," said Pichegru, as he passed Augereau, emphasizing the title, "if you promised those men that, you are doing very wrong not to keep your word."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE JOURNEY

FOUR carriages, or, rather, four boxes on wheels, inclosed on all sides with iron bars, which bruised the prisoners at every jolt, received the exiles. Four of them were placed in each cage, and no attention was paid either to their weakness or their wounds. Some of them had received sabre cuts; others had been wounded, either by the soldiers who had arrested them or by the mob, whose opinions always will be that the conquered do not suffer enough.

There was a keeper for each wagon and each group of four men, who had the care of the key of the padlock which closed the grating which served in lieu of a door.

General Dutertre commanded the escort, which consisted of four hundred infantry, two hundred cavalry, and two cannon.

Every time the exiles got in or out of the cages, the two pieces were trained diagonally upon the carriages, while gunners stood ready, with lighted matches in their hands, to fire the cannon, should any of them attempt to escape, both upon those who made the attempt and upon those who did not.

The condemned men began their journey on the 22d Fructidor (8th of September) in the midst of a terrible storm. They had to cross the whole length of Paris, starting with the Temple, and leaving the city through the Barrière d'Enfer, to take the road to Orleans. But instead of following the Rue Saint-Jacques, the escort, after crossing the bridge, turned to the right and led the procession to the Luxembourg. Here the three directors, or rather Barras, who was the three in himself, was giving a ball.

Barras, when notified, hastened to the balcony, followed by the guests, and pointed out Pichegru, three days earlier the rival of Moreau, Hoche, and Bonaparte, and with him Barthélemy, his former colleague, Villot, Delarue, Ramel—in short, all those whom the turn of Fortune's wheel or the forgetfulness of Providence had put in his power. The exiles heard Barras, amid noisy bursts of laughter and joy enjoin Dutertre, Augereau's man, "to take good care of these gentlemen." To which Dutertre replied: "Never fear, general."

We shall soon see what Barras meant when he said "Take good care of these gentlemen."

In the meantime the people who were coming out of the Odéon Club surrounded the wagons; and being refused permission to do what they urgently demanded to do—to tear the exiles to pieces—they consoled themselves by throwing fireworks which enabled them to see the prisoners without any trouble.

Finally the procession passed through the Rue d'Enfer to the accompaniment of fierce cries for their death and howls of rage, and left Paris. At two o'clock in the afternoon, having made only twenty-four miles, they reached Arpajon. Barthélemy and Barbé-Marbois, the weakest of the exiles, were lying upon their faces, apparently exhausted.

When they heard that the day's journey was ended, the prisoners hoped that they would be conducted to some suitable place where they could take a little rest. But the commander of the escort took them to the prison reserved

He fought the vessels as he would have attacked a fortress, sending a regiment of hussars to board it.

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for thieves, eagerly examining their faces and showing the utmost delight when they manifested repulsion and disgust. Unfortunately, the first wagon to be opened was the one in which Pichegru had travelled; his impassive face did not betray the least emotion. He merely said as they approached the hole: "If it is a stairway, give me a light; if it is a well, tell me so at once."

It was a staircase, of which several steps were missing. This calmness exasperated Dutertre.

"Ah, rascal," he said, "you think you can defy me; but we shall see one of these days whether I cannot find the end of your insolence."

Pichegru, who reached the bottom first, called out to his companions that some one had been thoughtful enough to spread straw for them, and thanked Dutertre for the attention. But the straw was soaking wet and the cell was foul.

Barthélemy came next, gentle, calm, but exhausted and aware that he could not expect an instant's repose. Lying half in the icy water, he raised his hands murmuring: "My God! my God!"

Then came Barbé-Marbois, who was upheld by the arms. At the mephitic odor which arose from the cell, he drew back and said: "Shoot me, and spare me the horror of such agony."

But the jailer's wife who stood behind him answered: "You are very particular. Better men than you have gone down there without making such a fuss." And with a vigorous shove she sent him head first from top to bottom of the stairs.

Villot, who was next, heard Barbé-Marbois cry out, and the answering cry of his comrades who darted forward to seize him as he fell, and grabbing the woman by the neck, he said: "Upon my word, I have a good notion to strangle you. What do you all say?"

"Leave her alone, and come down here with us," answered Pichegru.

They had raised Barbé-Marbois. His face was bruised,

and his jawbone broken. The three exiles who were safe and sound began to cry: "A surgeon! A surgeon!"

There was no answer. Then they asked for water to bathe their comrade's wounds; but the door was closed and it did not open until two hours later, and then only to pass in their dinner, consisting of a loaf of bread and a pitcher of water.

They were all very thirsty, but Pichegru, accustomed to all sorts of privations, immediately offered his portion of the water to bathe Barbé-Marbois's wound. The other prisoners, however, would not permit this sacrifice. The necessary amount of water was taken from the general fund; and as Barbé-Marbois could not eat, his portion was divided among the others.

On the next day, 23d Fructidor (9th of September), they started again at seven in the morning. No inquiries were made as to how the exiles had passed the night, and the wounded man was not allowed to see a surgeon. They reached Etampes at noon. Dutertre ordered a halt in the middle of the square, and exposed the prisoners to the insults of the crowd, who were permitted to surround the wagons, and who took advantage of the permission to hoot, curse, and bespatter with mud the men of whose crime they were ignorant, and who were prisoners in their eyes simply because they were prisoners. The exiles insisted that they go on, or be allowed to leave the wagons. Both requests were refused. One of the exiles, Tronçon de Coudray, was deputy for the Department of the Seine-et-Oise, which includes Etampes, and which was then the very canton whose inhabitants had supported his candidacy with the most enthusiasm.

He resented this ingratitude and desertion of his people therefore all the more keenly. Rising suddenly, as if he had been in the tribune, and replying to those who had called him by name, he said:

"Yes, it is I—I myself, your representative! Do you recognize him in this iron cage? It is I, whom you have in-

trusted with your rights, which are being violated in my person. I am dragged to punishment without having been tried, without even having been accused. My crime is that I have protected your liberty, your property, your persons; that I have wished to give peace to France, and by so doing to return to you your children who are being slaughtered by the enemy's bayonets. My crime is that I have been faithful to the Constitution to which we have sworn allegiance, and to-day, as a reward for my zeal in defending you, you join the ranks of my executioners! You are wretches and cowards, unworthy to be represented by a man of heart."

And he relapsed into his apparent indifference once more. The crowd was for a moment crushed and awed by this attack; but they soon renewed their insults, which became more outrageous than ever when the condemned men were given their dinner, which consisted of four loaves of bread and four bottles of wine. This exhibition lasted three hours.

That evening they stopped for the night at Angerville, and Dutertre wished to put the prisoners together in one cell, as he had done the night before. But an adjutant-general, who by an odd coincidence was named Augereau, took it upon himself to lodge them in an inn, where they passed a comfortable night, and where Barbé-Marbois was able to secure the services of a surgeon.

On the 24th Fructidor (10th September) they reached Orléans early, and passed the rest of that day and the following night in a house of confinement which had formerly been an Ursuline convent. This time the deputies were not guarded by their escort, but by gendarmes, who, while obeying orders, treated them with the utmost consideration. They quickly recognized in the two servants who had been sent to help them, in spite of their disguise of coarse clothing, two ladies of rank who had sought this opportunity to offer help and money. They even promised Villot and Delarue to assist them to escape. They could facilitate the escape of two prisoners, but no more. Villot and Delarue re-

fused, fearing that their flight would aggravate the fate of their two companions. The names of these two angels of charity have never been known. To name them at that time would have been to denounce them.

History has from time to time such moments of regret which give rise to a sigh.

The next day the party reached Blois. A crowd of boatmen were waiting for them on the outskirts of the town in the hopes of breaking open the wagons and murdering the prisoners. But the captain of cavalry commanding the detachment, whose name was Gautier—history has preserved his name, as it has that of Dutertre—signalled to the exiles that they need have no fear.

Then he took forty men and routed the rabble. But insults were nevertheless lavished upon them. The names of rascals, regicides, and panders were hurled blindly at them by the furious crowd, through the midst of which they passed on their way to a damp little church, where the prisoners found a small quantity of straw strewn upon the floor.

As they entered the church, the people crowded near enough for Pichegru to feel some one slip a little note into his hand. As soon as they were alone, Pichegru read the little note. It contained these words:

General, it only depends on yourself to leave your prison, mount a horse, and escape under an assumed name by means of a passport. If you consent, as soon as you have read this note, approach the guard who is watching you, taking care to leave your hat on your head; this will mean that you consent. Then, from midnight until two o'clock be dressed and on the alert.

Pichegru walked toward the guard bareheaded. The man who had endeavored to save him cast a glance of admiration at him and walked away.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE EMBARKATION

THE preparations for departure from Blois consumed such a length of time that the prisoners feared that they were to make a stay there, and that during that stay some harm would befall them. They were all the more convinced when the adjutant-general, who was in command of their troop under Dutertre—one Colin, well known in the country as the author of the massacres of the 2d of September—and one of his companions, named Guillet, who had no better reputation, entered the prison one morning about six o'clock.

They seemed much excited, grumbled as though to egg themselves on, and looked at the exiles with a baleful eye. The municipal officer who had accompanied the prisoners from Paris had an inspiration. He went straight up to them, and looking them in the eye, said: "Why do you delay the start? Everything has been ready for a long time. The crowd increases and your conduct is more than suspicious. I have seen and heard you both stirring up the people and urging them to acts of violence against the prisoners. I swear to you that should aught befall them when they go out, I will place my deposition upon the register, and that the responsibility shall fall upon you."

The two knaves stammered some excuse. The wagons were brought out, and the prisoners were accompanied with the same shouts, jeers and imprecations which had greeted them on the preceding day; but they were none of them hit by the stones which were thrown or by the blows which were aimed at them.

At Amboise they were placed for the night in a room so small that they were unable to lie down upon the straw. They were obliged either to stand up or to sit down.

They hoped to get some rest at Tours, but they were cruelly disappointed. The town authorities had recently been subjected to a weeding-out process, and were still terrorized. The prisoners were taken to the prison reserved for the galley-slaves. They were compelled to mingle with them, and some of the deputies asked for a place by themselves.

"That is your apartment," said the jailer, pointing to a little cell which was both damp and dirty.

Thereupon the galley-slaves gave evidence of more humanity than the jailers, for one of them approached the exiles, and said humbly:

"Gentlemen, we are very sorry to see you here. We are not worthy to approach you; but if, in the unhappy state to which we are reduced, there is any service which we can render you, we pray you to be good enough to accept it. The cell which has been prepared for you is colder and damper than ours; we beg of you to take ours, which is larger and drier than yours."

Pichegru thanked the poor wretches in the name of his companions, and, shaking hands with the one who had acted as spokesman, he said: "So it is to you that we must now look for human hearts!"

The exiles had not eaten for more than thirty hours, and each one now received a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine. It was a gala day for them.

The next day they stopped at Saint-Maure. Lieutenant-general Dutertre, having found in this little town a flying column of the National Guard composed of peasants, took advantage of the opportunity to relieve his troops, who could hardly put one foot before the other. He therefore ordered the column to guard the exiles, under the supervision of the municipality, which fortunately had not in this case been weeded out.

These worthy peasants took pity on the unfortunate prisoners. They brought them food and wine in such quantities that they could for the first time eat and drink in a

measure commensurate with their hunger and thirst. Besides this, they were less strictly guarded; and so negligent were these worthy people, most of whom were armed only with pikes, that they were permitted to go as far as the causeway, whence they could see the forest, which seemed to have been placed there expressly to afford them a refuge.

Ramel ventured to suggest a flight; but some opposed it on the score that it would seem like a confession of guilt, and others refused because their escape would have cruelly compromised their keepers, and would have involved the first of their kind who had shown compassion for their sufferings.

Day came and they had hardly slept, for the whole night had slipped away in the discussion, and they were forced to re-enter the iron cages and become once again the property of Dutertre. They crossed the dense forest at which they had gazed so eagerly the previous evening. The roads were frightful. Some of them obtained permission to walk between four of the cavalry. Barbé-Marbois, Barthélemy and Du Coudray, wounded and almost at the point of death, could not take advantage of this permission. They were lying upon the floor, and at every jolt were thrown against the iron bars, which bruised them and drew from them, in spite of their stoicism, cries of agony. Barthélemy was the only one who did not utter a single groan.

At Châtellereault they were confined in a cell so foul that three of them fell down asphyxiated as they entered. Pichegru pushed open the door just as they were about to close it, and seizing a soldier threw him to the rear of the cell. The man almost fainted, and reported that it would be impossible to live in such an atmosphere. The door was left open and a sentinel placed before it.

Barbé-Marbois was very ill. Du Coudray, who was taking care of him, was seated on the straw at his side. A man who for three years had been in irons in the neighboring cell obtained leave to visit them, brought them some fresh water, and offered his bed to Barbé-Marbois, who felt a little better after a couple of hours' sleep.

"Have patience," this man said to them; "one can get accustomed to anything in time. I am an example of this, for I have lived for three years in a cell like yours."

At Lusignan the prison was too small to hold the sixteen exiles. Rain poured in torrents and a cold wind was blowing from the north. Dutertre, who stopped at nothing, ordered the cages to be closed, had the horses unharnessed, and cages and prisoners remained in the public square. They had been there about an hour when the mayor of the town and the commander of the National Guard came and offered to be responsible for them if they were allowed to pass the night at the inn. The authorities gained their point, though not without some difficulty. The prisoners were no sooner established in three rooms, with sentinels at the doors and beneath the windows, than they saw a courier ride up and stop at the same inn to which they had been taken. Some of them, more hopeful than the others, were of the opinion that the courier came with good news. All were convinced that he was the bearer of a message of importance.

In fact he carried an order for the arrest of General Dutertre for extortions and larcenies committed since the departure of the exiles, and to take him back to Paris.

They found the eight hundred louis d'or which had been given him for the expense of the convoy still in his possession, which he had pocketed, levying contributions instead upon the towns through which he had passed. The exiles heard this with joy. They saw the carriage drive up which was to take him; and Ramel, whose curiosity impelled him to neglect precaution, opened the window. The sentinel in the street fired at once, and the ball shattered the window-pane.

Dutertre arrested, the conduct of the convoy fell to his second in command, Guillet.

But, as we have said, Guillet was not much better than Dutertre. On the day following, when they reached Saint-Maixant, the mayor approached the exiles and was so ill-advised as to say to them: "Gentlemen, I sympathize deeply with your situation, and all good citizens share my feeling."

Guillet himself seized the mayor, pushed him toward two soldiers, and ordered him to be imprisoned.

But this act of oppression so revolted the townsfolk, by whom the mayor seemed to be much beloved, that they rose in a body and forced Guillet to return them their mayor.

The thing that most disturbed the exiles was the fact that they were ignorant of their destination. They had heard Rochefort named, but in the vaguest possible manner. Deprived of all communication with their families, they could obtain no information as to the destiny which awaited them.

The secret was revealed at Surgeres. The mayor insisted that all the prisoners should be lodged at the inn, and had gained his point. Pichegru, Aubry, and Delarue were lying upon mattresses spread upon the floor of a room in the second story, separated from the floor below by planks which were so poorly joined that they could see and hear all that was going on below.

The leaders of the escort, all unsuspecting of the fact that they were both seen and heard, were at supper in the room below. A naval officer had just joined them. Every word that they said was of moment to the unfortunate exiles, and they listened attentively.

The supper, which was long and abundant, was very lively. The tortures which they inflicted upon the exiles formed the theme of merriment. But when the supper was finished, about half-past twelve, the naval officer remarked that it was about time to begin operations. This word "operations," as can readily be understood, riveted the attention of the listeners.

A man who was wholly unknown to them, and who acted as Guillet's secretary, brought pens, paper and ink, and began to write at that officer's dictation. He dictated a report, that, in conformity with the last orders of the Directory, the prisoners were to leave their cages only to go aboard the "Brilliant"—a brigantine fitting out at Rochefort to receive them.

Pichegru, Aubry, and Delarue, although thunderstruck by the tenor of this report, made a day ahead of time, which left no doubt as to their deportation, said nothing about it to their companions. They thought that it would be soon enough for them to learn the sad news at Rochefort.

They arrived there on the 21st of September, about three or four o'clock in the afternoon. The convoy left the main street and followed the fortification, where an immense crowd awaited them, turned the corner of the square, and went toward the bank of the Charente. There was now no longer any doubt, either for those who had heard the fatal secret, or for the thirteen who were as yet ignorant of it. They were about to be sent on shipboard, deprived of the barest necessities of life, and exposed to the dangers of a voyage whose goal was unknown to them.

At last the wagons stopped. Some hundreds of sailors and marines, disgracing the uniform of the navy, placed themselves in line with the exiles as they descended from their cages—which they almost regretted, to such extremes were they reduced. Ferocious cries welcomed them: "Down with the tyrants! Into the water with the traitors! Into the water with them!"

One of these men stepped forward, doubtless to accomplish his threat. The others pressed after him. General Villot walked straight up to him, and folding his arms, said: "Villain! you are too great a coward to render me that service!"

A boat approached, an official called to them, and, one after another, as they were named, the exiles got into the boat. The last, Barbé-Marbois, was in such a desperate condition that the official declared that if they took him aboard in that state he would not live two days.

"What is that to you?" brutally demanded Guillet; "you are only responsible for his bones."

A quarter of an hour later the exiles were on board a two-masted vessel lying at anchor in the middle of the river. It was the "Brilliant," a little privateer taken from the

English. They were received there by a dozen soldiers who seemed to have been especially chosen for the position of executioners. The exiles were thrust into a little space between decks so narrow that scarcely half of them could sit down, and so low that the others could not stand upright. They were obliged to take turns in two positions between which there was not much choice.

An hour after they had been put there some one remembered that they ought to have something to eat. Two buckets were sent down, one empty, the other filled with half-cooked beans swimming in reddish-water that was even more disgusting than the vessel which contained it. A loaf of bread and some water, the only things of which the prisoners partook, completed the foul repast which was destined for men whom their fellow-citizens had chosen as the most worthy among them to be their representatives.

The exiles would not touch the beans in the bucket—although they had eaten nothing for thirty-six hours—either because they were disgusted with their appearance, or because the guards had not seen fit to give them either spoons or forks; and, as they had to leave the door open in order to admit the air, they were obliged to submit to the jeers of the soldiers, who finally grew so offensive in their language that Pichegru, forgetting that he no longer held command over them, ordered them to be silent.

"You will do well to hold your tongue yourself," replied one of them; "you had better be careful, you are not out of our hands yet."

"How old are you?" asked Pichegru, seeing that he looked very young.

"Sixteen," replied the soldier.

"Gentlemen," said Pichegru, "if ever we return to France we must not forget this child; he promises well."

CHAPTER XXXV

FAREWELL, FRANCE!

FIVE hours elapsed before the vessel got under way; she did so at last, however, and after sailing for an hour, she stopped in the open roadstead. It was nearly midnight.

Then there was a great commotion on deck. Among the innumerable threats which greeted the exiles at Rochefort, cries of "Into the water!" and "Drink out of the great cup!" had been most frequent, and had reached the prisoners' ears. No one expressed his thought, but they each expected to find the end of their tortures in the bed of the Charente. The vessel to which they had been transferred was doubtless one of those which had a movable plug—an ingenious invention of Nero's to rid himself of his mother, and utilized by Carrier to drown the royalists.

They heard the order to put two of the ship's longboats into the water; then an officer commanded every one to stand to his place in a loud voice. Then, after a moment's silence, some one called the names of Pichegru and Aubry.

They embraced their companions and went on deck. A quarter of an hour passed. Suddenly the names of Barthélemy and Delarue were called.

Doubtless the two others had been made away with, and now it was their turn. They embraced their comrades, as Pichegru and Aubry had done, and went on deck, from which they were made to pass into a little boat, where they had to sit side by side in the thwart. A sailor placed himself upon another thwart opposite; the sail was hoisted and they were off like a shot. The two exiles kept feeling the planks with their feet, fancying that they could see the hole which had already swallowed up their comrades.

But this time their fears were without foundation; they were merely being transferred from the brigantine "Brilliant" to the corvette "Vaillante," whither two of their

companions had preceded them and where the others were to follow. They were received by Captain Julien, in whose face they sought in vain to read the secret of their destiny. He affected to look severely at them, but when he was alone with them he said: "Gentlemen, it is plain to be seen that you have suffered terribly. But have patience; while executing the orders of the Directory, I shall overlook and neglect nothing that can add to your comfort."

Unhappily for them, Guillet had followed them. He heard the last words, and an hour later Captain Julien was replaced by Captain Laporte.

Strange freak of Fate! The "Vaillante," a corvette carrying twenty-two guns, which the exiles were now boarding, had recently been built at Bayonne; and Villot, who was commanding general of the district, had been chosen to christen her. He himself had selected the name "Vaillante."

The exiles were sent between decks; and as it did not occur to any one to give them anything to eat, Dessonville, who suffered more than any of the others from lack of food, asked: "Do they really propose to let us die of hunger?"

"No, no, gentlemen," said an officer named Des Poyes, laughing. "Do not be uneasy, you will have your supper."

"Only give us some fruit," said the dying Barbé-Marbois; "something to cool our mouths."

A fresh burst of laughter welcomed this request, and some one threw the poor famished creatures a couple of loaves of bread from the deck.

"What a delicious supper," exclaims Ramel, "for poor devils who had eaten nothing for forty hours. And yet a supper we often thought of with regret, for it was the last time that we were given any bread."

Ten minutes later twelve hammocks were distributed to the prisoners; but Pichegru, Ramel, Villot and Dessonville received none.

"And where are we to sleep?" asked Pichegru.

"Come on deck," replied the voice of the new captain,

"and I will see that you are told." Pichegru and the others who had not received hammocks did as they were told.

"Put these men in the Lion's Den," said the captain; "that is the lodging set aside for them."

The Lion's Den is the cell set aside for sailors who are condemned to death. When the exiles between decks heard this order they gave vent to angry cries.

"No separation!" they cried. "Put us in that horrible cell with those gentlemen, or leave them here with us."

Barthélemy and his faithful Letellier—that brave servant who had refused to leave his master—dashed on deck; and seeing their four comrades in the clutches of soldiers who were dragging them toward the cell, they slid rather than climbed down the ladder, and found themselves in the hold with them.

"Here!" cried the captain from the top of the hatchway; "come back here, or I will have you driven up with the bayonet." But they lay down.

"There is neither first nor last among us," they retorted; "we are all guilty or we are all innocent. You must treat us all alike."

The soldiers advanced toward them with bayonets levelled, but they did not move. It was only when Pichegru and the others insisted upon it that they returned to the deck. The four were then left in the deepest darkness in the horrible cell, which was foul with exhalations from the hold. They had neither hammock nor coverings, and could not lie down, for the cell was too narrow, nor yet stand up, for it was too low.

The twelve others crowded between decks were not much better off; for the hatches were closed, and, like their comrades, they had no air and could not move about.

Toward four o'clock in the morning the captain gave the order to set sail; and amid the shouts of the crew, the creaking of the rigging, the roaring of the waves breaking against the corvette, like a sob from the sides of the vessel itself, came the last cry: "Farewell, France!"

And like an echo from the entrails of the hold the same cry was repeated, almost unintelligibly, on account of the depths whence it came: "Farewell, France."

The reader may perhaps wonder that I have dwelt so long upon this melancholy tale, which would become more melancholy still, were we to follow the ill-fated exiles to the end of their journey of forty-five days. But the reader would probably not have my courage, which I owe to the necessity not of rehabilitating them—I leave to history that task—but of directing the compassion of future generations toward the men who sacrificed themselves for France.

It has seemed to me that the old pagan saying, "Woe to the vanquished!" has always been brutal, and is nothing less than impious in these days of modernity; and by some instinct of my heart I always incline toward the vanquished and my sympathies are ever with them.

They who have read my books know that I have described with the same degree of impartiality and sympathy the demise of Joan of Arc at Rouen and the passing of Mary Stuart at Fotheringay, the appearance of Charles I. upon the scaffold at Whitehall and of Marie Antoinette on the Place de la Révolution.

But there is one peculiarity of historians which I have ever deplored, and that is that they marvel at the tears a king can shed, without studying as carefully the burden of agony which oppresses that poor human machine when dying, when it is supported by the conviction of its innocence and integrity, whether it belong to the middle or even the lower classes of society.

Such were these men whose sufferings I have endeavored to describe, and for whom we find not a single historian expressing regret, and who, by the clever expedient adopted by their persecutors of confusing them with men like Collot d'Herbois and Billaud-Varennes, were first despoiled of the sympathy of their contemporaries, and then cheated of their inheritance of the compassion of posterity.

THE EIGHTH CRUSADE

WHEN we announced to you, dear readers, the importance in matter of size alone of our novel of "The Whites and the Blues," that is to say, when we warned you that it would comprise a certain number of volumes, we said at the same time that it was the sequel of "The Companions of Jehu."

But as our plan comprised the description of the great events of the end of the last century and the beginning of this one, from 1793 to 1815—that is to say, to offer you a panorama of the twenty-two years of our history—we have filled nearly three volumes with descriptions of the principal crises of the Revolution, and have only reached the year 1799, in which our story of "The Companions of Jehu" begins.

If several of our characters, who play parts in that novel also appear in "The Whites and the Blues," it will not be surprising if at five or six points of the fresh episode upon which we are about to enter, the two narratives coincide, and if some of the chapters of the first book are repeated naturally enough in the second, since the events are not only on parallel lines, but are often identical.

Once we have passed the execution of Morgan and his companions, our novel will in reality become a sequel to "The Companions of Jehu," since the third and only remaining brother of the family of Sainte-Hermine becomes the hero and principal personage of the volumes which remain to be published under the title of "The Empire."

We give this explanation, dear readers, that you may not be surprised at this coincidence between the two books; and if we dared to ask so much at your hands, we would beg you to read again "The Companions of Jehu" when reading the "Eighth Crusade."

Do I need to add, dear readers, that this new work is the most strictly historical of any that I have undertaken, and was conceived, composed and written in pursuance of a great object; that, namely, of obtaining the perusal of ten volumes of history under the guise of ten volumes of romance? The events related in "The Whites and the Blues" are the most important of our age; and it is essential that our people, who have played such a leading rôle for the last seventy years in the affairs of Europe, and who are called upon to play a still greater part, should know these grand pages of our annals as they deserve to be known.

Then when restorations follow revolutions, and revolutions follow restorations, when each party, at the moment of its elevation, raises statues to those who represent it—statues destined to be cast down by the opposite party, only to give place to others—feeble minds and short-sighted visions falter before all these great men of the moment, who become traitors, and whom their contemporaries find no more difficulty in dishonoring than they did in exalting. It is therefore well for a keener eye and a more impartial mind to say: "This is plaster and this is marble; this is lead and this gold."

There are statues which are thrown from their pedestals and which rise again of themselves. There are, on the contrary, those which fall of themselves and which are shattered in their fall. Mirabeau, after having been carried to the Pantheon with great pomp, has no statue to-day. Louis XVI., after being tossed into the common ditch, has his memorial chapel.

Perhaps posterity has been rather severe with Mirabeau, and equally lenient toward Louis XVI., but we must bow alike before its severity and its indulgence. And yet, without envying Louis XVI. his memorial chapel, we would like to see a statue erected to Mirabeau. The more guilty of the two, in our opinion, was not he who sold but he who bought.

CHAPTER I

SAINT-JEAN-D'ACRE

ON THE 7th of April, 1799, the promontory on which Saint-Jean-d'Acre is built, the ancient Ptolemais, seemed to be wrapped in as much thunder and lightning as was Mount Sinai on the day when the Lord appeared to Moses from the burning bush.

Whence came those reports which shook the coast of Syria as with an earthquake? Whence came that smoke which covered the Gulf of Carmel with a cloud as thick as though Mount Elias had become a burning volcano?

The dream of one of those men, who with a few words change the whole destiny of the world, was accomplished. We are mistaken; we should have said, had vanished. But perhaps it had vanished only to give place to a reality of which this man, ambitious as he was, had never dared to dream.

On the 10th of September, 1797, when the conqueror of Italy heard at Passeriano of the 18th Fructidor and the promulgation of the law which condemned two of the directors, fifty-four deputies, and a hundred and forty-eight private individuals to exile, he fell into a profound revery.

He was doubtless calculating, in his mind, the influence which would accrue to him from this *coup d'état*, which his hand had directed although Augereau's had alone been visible. He was walking with his secretary, Bourrienne, in the beautiful park of the palace. Suddenly he raised his head and said without any apparent reference to what had gone before: "Assuredly, Europe is a mole-hill. There has never been a great empire or a great revolution save in the East, where there are six hundred millions of men."

Then when Bourrienne, totally unprepared for this outburst, looked at him in astonishment, he seemed to lose himself again in revery.

On the 1st of January, 1798, Bonaparte—who had been recognized in his box, in which he was trying to conceal himself, at the first performance of "Horatius Cocles," and saluted with an ovation and cries of "Long live Bonaparte!" which shook the building three times—returned to his house in the Rue Chantereine (newly named the Rue de la Victoire) wrapped in melancholy, and said to Bourrienne, to whom he always confided his gloomy thoughts:

"Believe me, Bourrienne, nobody remembers anything in Paris. If I should do nothing for six months I should be lost. One reputation in this Babylon replaces another; they will not see me three times at the theatre before they will cease to look at me."

Again, on the 29th of the same month, he said to Bourrienne, still absorbed in the same dream: "Bourrienne, I will not stay here; there is nothing to be done. If I do remain I am done for; everything goes to seed in France. I have already exhausted my glory. This poor little Europe cannot furnish enough; *I must go to the East.*"

Finally, when he was walking down the Rue Sainte-Anne, with Bourrienne, about a fortnight before his departure on the 18th of April, his secretary, to whom he had not spoken a word since they left the Rue Chantereine, in order to break the silence which annoyed him, said: "Then you have really decided to leave France, general?"

"Yes," replied Bonaparte, "I asked to be one of them, and they refused me. If I stay here I shall have to overthrow them and make myself king. The nobles would never consent to that; I have sounded the ground and the time has not yet come. I should be alone. I must dazzle the people. We will go to Egypt, Bourrienne."

Therefore it was not to communicate with Tippoo-Sahib across Asia, and to attack England in India, that Bonaparte left Europe.

"I must dazzle the people." In those words lay the true motive for his departure.

On the 3d of May, 1798, he ordered all the generals to embark their troops. On the 4th he left Paris. On the 8th he reached Toulon. On the 19th he went aboard the admiral's vessel, the "Orient." On the 25th he sighted Leghorn and the island of Elba. On the 13th of June he took Malta. On the 19th he set sail again. On the 3d of July he took Alexandria by assault. On the 13th he won the battle of Chebrouïss. On the 21st he crushed the Mamelukes at the Pyramids. On the 25th he entered Cairo. On the 14th of August he learned of the disaster of Aboukir. On the 24th of December he started, with the members of the Institute, to visit the remains of the Suez Canal. On the 28th he drank at the fountains of Moses, and, like Pharaoh, was almost drowned in the Red Sea. On the 1st of January, 1799, he planned the expedition into Syria. He had conceived the idea six months earlier.

At that time he wrote to Kléber:

If the English continue to overrun the Mediterranean, they will perhaps force us to do greater things than we at first intended.

There was a vague rumor concerning an expedition which the Sultan of Damascus was sending against the French, in which Djezzar Pasha, surnamed "The Butcher." because of his cruelty, led the advance-guard.

The rumor had taken definite shape. Djezzar had advanced by Gaza as far as El-Arich, and had massacred the few French soldiers who were there in the fortress.

Among his young ordnance officers, Bonaparte had the brothers Mailly de Château-Renaud. He sent the younger with a flag of truce to Djezzar, who, in defiance of military law, took him prisoner. This was a declaration of war. Bonaparte, with his customary rapidity of decision, determined to destroy the advance-guard of the Ottoman Empire.

In case of success, he himself would tell later what were his hopes. If repulsed, he would raze the walls of Gaza, Jaffa, and Acre, ravage the country and destroy all the supplies, making it impossible for an army, even a native one, to cross the desert.

On the 11th of February, 1799, Bonaparte entered Syria at the head of twelve thousand men. He had with him that galaxy of gallant men who gravitated around him during the first and most brilliant part of his life.

He had Kléber, the handsomest and bravest horseman in the army. He had Murat, who disputed this double title with Kléber. He had Junot, who was such a remarkable shot that he could split a dozen balls in succession on the point of a knife. He had Lannes, who had already earned his title of Duc de Montebello, but had not yet assumed it. He had Reynier, who was destined to decide the victory of Heliopolis. He had Caffarelli, who was doomed to lie in that trench which he had dug.

And in subordinate positions he had for aides-de-camp Eugene de Beauharnais, our young friend of Strasbourg, who had brought about the marriage between Josephine and Bonaparte by going to ask the latter for his father's sword. He had Croisier, gloomy and taciturn ever since he had faltered in an encounter with the Arabs and the word "coward" had escaped Bonaparte's lips. He had the elder of the two Maillys, who was determined to deliver or avenge his brother. He had the young Sheik of Aher, chief of the Druses, whose name, if not his power, extended from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean.

And, finally, he had an old acquaintance of ours, Roland de Montrevel, whose habitual intrepidity had, since the day of his capture at Cairo, been doubled by that strange desire for death which we have seen him display in "The Companions of Jehu."

On the 17th of February the army reached El-Arich. The soldiers had suffered greatly from thirst during the journey. Only once did they find refreshment and amuse-

ment at the end of their day's stage. That was at Messou diah, or "The Fortunate Spot," on the shores of the Mediterranean, at a place composed of small dunes of fine sand. Here chance led a soldier to imitate Moses' miracle. As he thrust his stick into the ground, the water gushed forth as from an artesian well. The soldier tasted it, and finding it excellent, he called his comrades and shared his discovery with them. Every one then punched his own hole and had his own well. Nothing more was needed to restore the soldiers to cheerfulness.

El-Arich surrendered at the first summons. On the 28th of February the green and fertile plains of Syria came in sight. At the same time, mountains and valleys, recalling those of Europe, could be plainly discerned through a light rain—a rare thing in the East.

On the 1st of March they camped at Ramleh—the ancient Rama, where Rachel gave way to her great despair, which the Bible describes in this nobly pathetic verse:

> In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentations and weepings and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they were not.

Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and Joseph passed by Rama on their way to Egypt. The church which the monks gave Bonaparte for a hospital was built on the very spot where the holy family stopped to rest.

The well whose fresh, pure water slaked the thirst of the whole army was the very same which, seventeen hundred and ninety-nine years before, had refreshed the holy fugitives. He also was from Rama, that disciple Joseph, whose pious hand wrapped the body of our Lord Jesus Christ in the shroud.

Perhaps not one man in the whole vast multitude knew the sacred tradition. But one thing they did know, and that was that they were not more than eighteen miles from Jerusalem.

As they walked beneath the olive trees which are per-

haps the most beautiful in all the East, and which the soldiers ruthlessly cut down to make their bivouac fires, Bourrienne asked Bonaparte: "General, shall you not go to Jerusalem?"

"Oh, no," he replied, carelessly; "Jerusalem is not within my line of operations. I do not care to get into trouble with the mountaineers on these bad roads; and then on the other side of the mountain I should be attacked by a large body of cavalry. I have no ambition to emulate the fate of Crassus."

Crassus, it will be remembered, was massacred by the Parthians.

There is this that is strange in Bonaparte's life, that while he was at one time within eighteen miles of Jerusalem (the cradle of Christ) and at another within eighteen miles of Rome (the cradle of the Papacy), he had no desire to see either Rome or Jerusalem.

CHAPTER II

THE PRISONERS

TWO days before, within a mile of Gaza (which means in Arabic "treasure" and in Hebrew "strong")—the same Gaza whose gates were carried away by Samson, who died with three thousand Philistines beneath the ruins of the temple which he had overthrown—they had met Abdallah, Pasha of Damascus.

He was at the head of his cavalry. That pertained to Murat's department. Murat took a hundred men from the thousand which he commanded, and with his riding-whip in his hand—for when opposed to the Mussulman, Arab, and Maugrabin cavalry he rarely deigned to draw his sabre—he charged them vigorously. Abdallah turned and fled toward the town. The army followed him and took up its position on the opposite side.

They arrived at Ramleh the day after this skirmish.

From Ramleh they marched upon Jaffa. To the soldiers' great satisfaction, the clouds gathered above their heads for the second time, and the rain fell. A deputation was sent to Bonaparte in the name of the army, asking that they be allowed to take a bath. Bonaparte granted the permission and ordered a halt. Then each soldier pulled off his clothes and revelled in the luxury of feeling the cool rain upon his burning body. Then the army started again, refreshed and joyous, and singing the "Marseillaise" with one accord.

Abdallah's Mamelukes and cavalry no more dared wait for the French than they had dared wait at Gaza. They returned to their city firm in their belief that every Mussulman is safe so long as he is behind a wall. This garrison of Jaffa was composed of a singular medley, who, drunk with fanaticism, were now about to set the best army in the world at defiance.

There were representatives there from all parts of the East—from the extreme end of Africa to the uttermost confines of Asia. There were Maugrabins with their long white coats. There were Albanians, with their long guns mounted in silver and inlaid with coral. There were Kurds, with their long lances ornamented with ostrich plumes. There were Aleppians, who all wore, either on one cheek or the other, the mark of the famous button of Aleppo. There were men of Damascus with curved swords of such finely tempered steel that they could cut a silk handkerchief floating in the air. There were Nataloians, Karamanians, and negroes.

On the 3d they arrived before the walls of Jaffa, and on the 4th the city was invested. On the same day Murat made a reconnoissance around the ramparts to determine on which side it would be best to attack. On the 7th everything was in readiness to bombard the city.

Bonaparte desired to try conciliatory measures before beginning the bombardment. He knew the meaning of a struggle against such a population, even were he victorious.

He dictated the following summons:

God is merciful and pitiful.

General Bonaparte, whom the Arabs have surnamed the "Sultan of Fire," charges me to tell you that Djezzar Pasha commenced hostilities in Egypt by taking the fortress of El-Arich; that God, who is always on the side of justice, gave the victory to the French army, who recaptured the fortress, from which he desires to drive the troops of Djezzar Pasha, who ought never to have entered it; that Jaffa is surrounded on all sides; that the batteries will begin in two hours to batter down the walls with shot and shell, and destroy the defences; that his heart is touched by the thought of the harm that would befall the city and its inhabitants should it be taken by assault; that he offers a safe-conduct and protection to the garrison and the inhabitants of the city, and that he will consequently postpone the bombardment until seven o'clock in the morning.

The summons was addressed to Abou-Saib, the governor of Jaffa. Roland held out his hand to take it.

"What are you doing?" asked Bonaparte.

"Do you not need a messenger?" replied the young man, laughing; "it may as well be I as any one else."

"No," replied Bonaparte; "on the contrary, it had better be any one else than you, and better a Mussulman than a Christian."

"Why so, general?"

"Because while Abou-Saib may perhaps cut off the head of a Mussulman, he would most certainly cut off that of a Christian."

"All the more reason," replied Roland, shrugging his shoulders.

"Enough," said Bonaparte: "I do not wish it."

Roland went off into a corner pouting like a spoiled child.

Then Bonaparte said to his dragoman: "Ask whether there is any Turk or Arab, in short any Mussulman, who will undertake to deliver this despatch."

The dragoman repeated the question aloud.

A Mameluke from the dromedary corps came forward.

"I will," said he.

The dragoman looked at Bonaparte.

"Tell him what he risks," said the general-in-chief.

"The Sultan of Fire wishes you to know that you risk your life in taking this message."

"What is written is written," replied the Mussulman, and he held out his hand.

He was given a white flag and a trumpeter. They approached the town on horseback, and the gates opened to receive them. Ten minutes later there was a great commotion on the ramparts just in front of the general's camp. The trumpeter appeared, dragged roughly along by two Albanians. They ordered him to sound his trumpet to attract the attention of the French army.

He sounded the call. Just as all eyes were fixed upon the walls, a man approached holding in his hand a severed head wearing a turban. He extended his arm over the ramparts; the turban fell off, and the head dropped at the foot of the wall. It belonged to the Mussulman who had carried the summons. Ten minutes later the trumpeter came out of the same gate through which he had entered, but he was alone.

The next morning at seven o'clock, as Bonaparte had said, six pieces began to thunder one after the other. At four o'clock the breach was practicable, and Bonaparte ordered the assault. He looked around for Roland to give him the command of one of the regiments which were to enter the breach. Roland was not there.

The carabineers of the twenty-second light brigade and the chasseurs of the same brigade, supported by the artillery and the engineers, rushed forward to the assault, commanded by General Rambeau, Adjutant-general Nethervood, and Vernois. They all mounted to the breach; and in spite of the fusillade which met them in front, and the showers of grape from the few cannon which had not been silenced, and which took them from behind, they waged a terrible fight over the fallen tower.

The struggle lasted for a quarter of an hour, and the

besiegers had not been able to enter the breach, nor had the besieged succeeded in forcing them back. All the efforts on both sides seemed to be concentrated on the spot, when suddenly Roland appeared upon the dismantled tower holding a Turkish standard and followed by some fifty men. He waved the standard crying: "The city is taken!"

This is what had happened: That morning about six o'clock, the hour of dawn in the East, Roland had gone down to his bath in the sea, and there had discovered a sort of breach in the angle made by a wall and a tower. He had assured himself that the breach led into the city; then he took his bath and returned to the army just as the bombardment had begun. There, as he was well known to be one of Bonaparte's privileged favorites, and at the same time one of the most recklessly daring officers in the army, cries of "Captain Roland! Captain Roland!" resounded on all sides.

Roland knew what that meant. It meant, "Haven't you something impossible to attempt? Here we are."

"Fifty volunteers!" he cried.

A hundred offered themselves.

"Fifty!" he repeated.

And he selected the fifty, taking every other man in order not to hurt their feelings. Then he took two trumpeters and two drummers, and leading the way himself, he conducted them through the hole he had found into the city. His fifty men followed him.

They met a party of about one hundred men carrying a flag. They fell upon them and harried them with their bayonets. Roland seized the flag, and it was that one which he had waved from the ramparts. He was hailed by shouts from the whole army; but he thought the time had now come to use his drums and trumpets.

The whole garrison was at the breach, not expecting any rear attack, when they suddenly heard the drums beside them and the French trumpets behind them. At the same time, two discharges of musketry and a hailstorm of bullets

fell among the besieged. They turned, only to see gun-barrels reflecting the rays of the sun and tri-colored plumes waving in the wind in every direction. The smoke drifting toward them on the sea-breeze concealed the small number of the French rear attacking party. They believed that they had been betrayed. A frightful panic ensued, and they deserted the breach.

But Roland had sent ten of his men to open one of the gates. General Lannes's division poured in, and the besieged found French bayonets where they had thought to find the road clear for flight. By a reaction common to ferocious people, who, never giving quarter, never expect any, they seized their arms with renewed fury, and the combat began again with all the appearance of a massacre. Bonaparte, being ignorant of what was happening within the walls —seeing the smoke rising along the ramparts and hearing the rattle of musketry, while no one returned, not even the wounded—sent Eugene de Beauharnais and Croisier to see what was going on, bidding them to return and report at once.

They both wore the emblem of their rank, the aide-de-camp's scarf, on their arm. They had been impatiently awaiting the word which would permit of their taking part in the fight. They entered the town at a run and penetrated to the very heart of the carnage. They were recognized as envoys of the commander-in-chief, and as they were supposed to be the bearers of a message the firing ceased for a minute. A few of the Albanians could speak French. One of them cried: "If our lives are spared we will surrender at once. If not, we will fight until the last one of us is killed."

The two aides-de-camp had no means of knowing Bonaparte's secrets. They were young and they were actuated by sentiments of humanity. Without authority they promised the poor fellows that their lives should be spared. The firing ceased, and the prisoners were taken to the camp. There were four thousand of them.

As for the soldiers, they knew their rights. The town had been taken by assault. After the massacre came the pillage.

CHAPTER III

THE CARNAGE

BONAPARTE was walking in front of his tent with Bourrienne, impatiently awaiting news, and having no other of his intimates at hand, when he saw two troops of armed men leaving the town by different gates. One of them was led by Croisier, and the other by Eugene de Beauharnais. Their young faces shone with joy.

Croisier, who had not smiled since he had had the misfortune to displease the commander-in-chief, was smiling now, for he hoped that this fine prize would conciliate the master. Bonaparte understood the whole thing. He grew pale, and said sorrowfully: "What do you suppose I am going to do with those men? Have I food to give them? Have I ships to send the wretched creatures to France or Egypt?"

The two young men halted ten feet from him. They saw by the rigid expression of his face that they had made a mistake.

"What have you there?" he asked.

Croisier dared not reply, but Eugene spoke for both.

"As you see, general, prisoners."

"Did I tell you to take any prisoners?"

"You told us to stop the carnage," replied Eugene, timidly.

"Yes," replied the general, "of women, children, and old men I did; but not of armed soldiers. Do you know that you have forced me to commit a crime?"

The young men understood and retired in dismay. Croisier was weeping. Eugene tried to console him; but he shook his head and said: "It is all over with me; the first opportunity that offers I shall let myself be shot."

Before deciding upon the fate of the unfortunate prisoners, Bonaparte decided to call a council of the generals. But soldiers and generals had bivouacked outside the town. The soldiers did not stop until they were weary. Besides the four thousand prisoners, they left nearly five thousand dead. The pillage of the houses lasted all night. From time to time shots echoed through the night. Dull cries of anguish resounded incessantly in the streets, the houses, and the mosques.

They came from soldiers who were dragged from their places of concealment and slaughtered; by inhabitants who were trying to defend their treasures; by husbands and fathers who were striving to defend their wives and daughters from the brutality of the soldiers.

But the vengeance of Heaven was hidden beneath all this cruelty. The plague was in Jaffa, and the army carried the germs of it away with them.

The prisoners were, in the first place, ordered to sit down together in front of the tents. Their hands were tied behind their backs. Their faces were downcast, more from dread of what was in store for them than from anger. They had seen Bonaparte's face darken when he perceived them; and they had heard, although they had not understood it, the reprimand which he had bestowed upon the young soldiers. But what they had not understood they had divined.

Some of them ventured to say, "I am hungry"; others, "I am thirsty."

They brought them all water and gave each of them a piece of bread, taken from the soldiers' rations. This reassured them a trifle.

As fast as the generals returned they were bidden to repair at once to the general-in-chief's tent. They deliberated a long time without arriving at any decision. On the following day the diurnal reports of the generals of division came in. All complained of insufficient rations. The only ones who had eaten and drunk their fill were

those who had entered the town during the fight and were therefore entitled to take part in the pillage. But they constituted merely a fourth of the army. All the rest complained at having to share their bread with the enemy, who had been rescued from legitimate vengeance; since, according to the laws of war, Jaffa having been taken by storm, all the soldiers who were within its walls should have perished by the sword.

The council assembled once more. Five questions were proposed for its deliberation.

"Should the men be sent to Egypt?"

But this would require a large escort, and the army was already over-weak to defend itself against the deadly hostility of the country. Besides that, how could they and their escort be fed until they reached Cairo, when they would be obliged to travel through the enemy's country, previously laid waste by the army which had just passed through it and which had no food to give the prisoners to start with.

"Should they put them on shipboard?"

Where were the ships? Where could they be found? The sea was like a desert, or at least it was dotted by no friendly sails.

"Should they be restored to liberty?"

In that case they would go straight to Saint-Jean-d'Acre, to reinforce the Pasha, or else into the mountains of Nablos. Then in every ravine they would be assailed by an invisible army of sharpshooters.

"Should they incorporate them, disarmed as they were, in the Republican army?"

But the provisions, already scanty for ten thousand men, would be still more inadequate for fourteen thousand. Then they ran great danger from such comrades in a hostile country. At the first opportunity they would deal out death for the life which had been left them. What is a dog of a Christian to a Turk? Is it not a pious and meritorious act in the eyes of the Prophet to deal death to the infidel?

Bonaparte rose as they were about to propose the fifth condition.

"Let us wait until to-morrow," he said.

He himself could not have told what he expected to gain by waiting. It was for one of those strange chances, which sometimes prevent a great crime, and which, when they intervene, are called the interposition of Providence.

He waited in vain. On the fourth day, the question, which they had not dared to ask had to be confronted:

"Should the prisoners be shot?"

The murmurs were increasing, and the evil was growing. The soldiers might at any moment throw themselves upon the prisoners, and thus lend an appearance of revolt and assassination to that which was in reality an outcome of the necessities of the case.

The sentence was unanimous, with the exception of a single vote. One of those present did not vote at all. The unfortunates were to be shot.

Bonaparte hastened from his tent and gazed searchingly out to sea. A tempest of human emotions was surging in his breast. He had not at that period acquired the stoicism born of numerous battlefields. The man who later looked upon Austerlitz, Eylau, and Moscow without moving a muscle, was not sufficiently familiarized with death to throw such prey to him at one fell swoop without a tremor of remorse. On the vessel which had conveyed him to Egypt his pity and compassion had astonished everybody. During such a journey it was impossible to avoid occasional accidents, or that some men should not fall overboard. This accident occurred several times during the crossing on board the "Orient." At such times only was it possible to compass all the human feeling in Bonaparte's heart.

As soon as he heard the cry, "Man overboard!" he would dart up on deck if he were not already there and order a boat to be lowered. From that moment he would not rest until the man was found and saved. Bourrienne had orders to reward with great liberality the men who had

undertaken the task of rescue, and if there were among them a sailor who deserved punishment for neglect of duty, he pardoned him and rewarded him with money besides.

One dark night the splash of a body falling into the water was heard. Bonaparte as usual rushed from his cabin to the deck, and ordered a boat to be lowered. The sailors, who knew that not only were they doing a good deed, but that they would be rewarded for it afterward, threw themselves into the boat with their customary activity and zeal. After five minutes of ceaseless questioning on Bonaparte's part, "Has the man been saved?" he was rewarded with a shout of laughter.

The man who had fallen into the water was a quarter of beef from the store-room.

"Double the reward, Bourrienne," said Bonaparte; "it might have been a man, and the next time they might think it was merely a quarter of beef."

The order for this execution must emanate from him. He delayed giving it, and the time was passing. Finally he called for his horse, leaped into his saddle, took an escort of twenty men, and rode away, crying: "Do it!"

He dared not say, "Fire!"

A scene like that which ensued cannot be described.

Those great massacres which occurred during the course of antiquity have no place in modern history. Out of the four thousand a few escaped, because, having thrown themselves into the water, they were able to swim out to some reefs where they were beyond the range of the musketry.

Neither Eugene de Beauharnais nor Croisier dared show themselves before Bonaparte until they reached Saint-Jean-d'Acre and were compelled to take their orders from him.

The French were encamped before Saint-Jean-d'Acre on the 18th. In spite of the English frigates lying in the harbor, some of the young officers, among them the Sheik of Aher, Roland and the Comte de Mailly, asked permission to go and bathe in the roadstead. The permission was accorded.

When they were diving De Mailly found a leather sack, which was floating under water. The bathers were curious to know what it contained and swam with it to the bank. It was tied up with a cord, and apparently concealed a human body.

The cord was untied, the sack opened, and Mailly recognized the head and body of his brother, who had been sent a month before with a flag of truce to Djezzar Pasha, who had beheaded him when he perceived the dust made by the advance-guard of the French.

CHAPTER IV

FROM ANCIENT DAYS TO OUR OWN

SINCE it is our good fortune to have readers sufficiently intelligent to encourage us to write a book in which romance is relegated to the second place, we shall doubtless be permitted to detail not only the modern, but also the ancient history of the places which we visit with our heroes. There is much charm for the poet, the historian, even the dreamer, in treading upon soil composed of the ashes of past generations; and nowhere more than in the region we are now treading do we find traces of those great historical catastrophes which, becoming less substantial and fainter in outline as the years roll past, finally disappear like ruins and the spectres of ruins amid the ever-thickening shadows of the past.

This is true of the city which we have just left, throbbing with shrieks of anguish, overflowing with carnage and blood, with its walls battered to pieces and its houses in flames. The rapid movement of our narrative, and our desire to enter modern Jaffa with our young conqueror, have hitherto prevented us from telling you what manner of place was the Jaffa of olden days.

Jaffa in Hebrew signifies beauty. Joppa in Phœnician means height.

Jaffa is to the eastern gulf of the Mediterranean what Jiddah is to the Red Sea. It is the city of pilgrims. Every Christian pilgrim on his way to visit the tomb of Christ takes in Jaffa on the road. Every Mussulman *hadji* who goes to Mecca to visit the Prophet's tomb takes in Jiddah on his way.

When we read the great works of to-day on Egypt—works in which the most learned men of the day have united their efforts—we are astonished to find so few of these luminous points which, placed in the dark night of the past, illuminate and attract the traveller like beacons.

We are about to attempt what they have neglected to do.

The author who assigns to Jaffa (the Joppa of the Phœnicians) the most ancient place in history is Pomponius Mela, who affirms that it was built before the deluge.

Est Joppe ante diluvium condita.

And Joppa must have built before the deluge, since the historian Josephus, in his "Antiquities," says, with Berosius and Nicolas of Damascus, not exactly that the Ark was built at Joppa—for that would be in contradiction with the Bible—but that it stopped there. They assure us that in their time fragments of it were still shown to incredulous travellers, and that they used as a remedy, which was efficacious in all cases as a universal panacea, the dust of the tar which was used to coat the Ark.

It was at Joppa, if we may believe Pliny, that Andromeda was chained to the rocks, to be devoured by the sea-monster; there she was delivered by Perseus, mounted on the Chimera and armed with the head of Medusa, which turned the beholder into stone.

Pliny affirms that during the reign of Adrian the holes through which Andromeda's chain had been passed were still visible; and Saint Jerome—a witness who cannot be accused of partiality—declares that he saw them.

The skeleton of the sea-monster, forty feet long, was thought by some of the people of Joppa to be that of the divinity Ceto. The water of the fountain in which Perseus

bathed after killing the monster was ever afterward tinged with his blood. Pausanias tells us so, and declares that he saw the rose-tinged water with his own eyes. Ceto, a goddess of whom Pliny speaks (*colitur fabulosa Ceto*), and who is called Derceto by historians, was the name which tradition gave to the unknown mother of Semiramis.

Diodorus relates the pretty fable of the unknown mother with the quaint charm which makes poetry of this fable without robbing it of its sensuousness.

"There is," he says, "in Syria a city called Ascalon, overlooking a deep lake in which fish abound, and near it is a temple dedicated to the celebrated goddess whom the Syrians call Derceto.

"She has a head and a face like a woman's; all the rest of the body is that of a fish. The learned men of the nation say that Venus, having been offended by Derceto, inspired her with a passion for a young priest as intense as that which she had awakened in Phedrus and Sappho. Derceto had a daughter by him; but she repented so bitterly of her fault that she caused the youth to disappear, abandoned the infant in a desert place full of rocks, and threw herself into the lake, where her body was transformed into that of a siren. For this reason the Syrians worship the fish as gods, and abstain from eating them.

"But the little girl was saved and fed by doves, who came in great numbers and made their nests among the rocks where she had been left to die.

"A shepherd found her and brought her up with as much care as if she had been his own daughter, and named her Semiramis, or 'the daughter of the doves.' "

If we may believe Diodorus, it is to this daughter of the doves, the haughty Semiramis, the wife and murderess of Ninus, who fortified Babylon and laid out those magnificent gardens, the envy and the admiration of the ancient world, that the Orientals owe the splendid costume which they wear to this day. When she had reached the height of her power, having conquered Egyptian Arabia, a part

of Ethiopia, Libya, and all Asia as far as the Indus, she felt the need of inventing a costume for her travels which should be at once convenient and elegant, in which she could not only perform the ordinary duties of life, but also ride horseback and fight. This costume was adopted by all the people whom she conquered.

"She was so beautiful," says Valerius Maximus, "that one day when an insurrection broke out in her capital, just as she was at her toilet, she had only to show herself, half naked and with her hair unbound, to restore order."

Perhaps we may find the reason for Venus' hatred of Derceto in Higinus.

"The Syrian goddess who was worshipped at Hierapolis," he says, "was Venus. An egg fell from heaven into the Euphrates; the fishes brought it to the bank, where it was hatched by a dove. Venus issued from it, and became the goddess of the Syrians, while Jupiter, at her request, placed the fishes in the sky; and she in gratitude harnessed her nurses to her chariot."

The famous temple of Dagon, where the statue of the god was found overturned before the Ark with both hands broken, was situated in the city of Azoth, between Joppa and Ascalon.

Read the Bible, that great treasure-house of history and poetry, and you will see that the cedars of Lebanon, brought for the building of the Temple of Solomon, came from the gates of Joppa. You will see that the prophet Jonah came to the gates of Joppa to embark for Tarsus when he was flying from the face of the Lord.

Then, passing from the Bible to Josephus, whose writings may be called the continuation of it, you will see that Judas Maccabeus, to avenge his two hundred brethren who had been treacherously slain by the inhabitants, came with sword and firebrand and set fire to the ships anchored in the port, and put to death with the sword all who had escaped the fire.

We read in the Acts of the Apostles as follows:

There was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did.

And it came to pass in those days that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed they laid her in an upper chamber.

And for as much as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

Then Peter arose and went to them. When he was come, they brought him to the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats which Dorcas had made when she was with them.

But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down and prayed; and turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, arise!" And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

And he gave her his hand and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows he presented her alive.

And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

And it came to pass that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon, a tanner.

It was there that the servants of the centurion Cornelius found him when they came to beg him to go to Cesarea. It was in Simon's house that he had the vision bidding him carry the Gospel to the Gentiles.

At the time of the rising of the Jews against Rome, Sextus besieged Joppa, took it by storm and burned it. Eight thousand of the inhabitants perished; but it was soon rebuilt. As the new city was constantly sending forth pirates, who infested the coasts of Syria and made expeditions as far as Greece and even Egypt, the Emperor Vespasian took it again, razed it to the ground from the first to the last house, and built a fortress on its site.

But in his Jewish wars, Josephus relates that a new city soon sprang up at the foot of the fortress of Vespasian, which became the seat of a bishopric, or rather of a bishop, from the reign of Constantine, A.D. 330, until the invasion of the Arabs in 636. This bishopric was established during

the First Crusade, and made subject to the metropolitan See of Cesarea. Finally it was converted into a county, and embellished and fortified by Baldwin I., Emperor of Constantinople.

Saint Louis also came to Joppa; and Joinville, his ingenuous historian, tells of the sojourn which he made with the Comte de Japhe, as the good chevalier Frenchifies the name.

This Comte de Japhe, who was Gautier de Brienne, did his best to clean and whitewash the city, which was in such a deplorable state that Saint Louis was ashamed of it, and took it upon himself to build its walls and beautify its churches. Saint Louis received the news of his mother's death while there.

"When the sainted king," writes Joinville, "saw the archbishop of Tyre and his confessor entering his apartments with expressions of sorrow, he asked them to go with him to his chapel, which was his refuge from all the ills of the world.

"Then when he had heard the fatal news, he fell upon his knees, and with clasped hands he exclaimed, weeping: 'I thank thee, O God, that thou didst lend my mother to me, while it seemed best to thee, and for that, in thy good pleasure, thou hast taken her again to thee. It is true that I loved her above all other creatures, and she deserved it; but since thou hast taken her from me, may thy holy name be blessed for evermore.' "

The works erected by Saint Louis were destroyed in 1268 by the Pasha of Egypt, Bibas, who levelled the citadel to the ground, and sent the wood and precious marbles of it which it was composed to Cairo to build his mosque.

Finally, when Monconys visited Palestine, he found at Jaffa only a castle and three caves hollowed out of a rock. We have told of its condition when Bonaparte entered it, and in what state he left it.

We shall return once more to this town, which to Bonaparte was neither Jaffa the Beautiful, nor Jaffa the Lofty, but Jaffa the Fatal.

CHAPTER V

SIDNEY SMITH

ON THE 18th, at daybreak, while the army was crossing the little stream of the Kerdaneah, on a bridge thrown over it during the night, Bonaparte, accompanied only by Roland de Montrevel, the Sheik of Aher, and the Comte de Mailly, whom he was utterly unable to reconcile to his brother's death, do what he would, ascended a little hill not far from the town to which he had laid siege.

From its summit he could see the whole country, including not only the two English vessels, "Tiger" and "Theseus," rocking upon the breast of the sea, but also the troops of the Pasha, occupying all the gardens around the city.

"Let all that rabble be dislodged from those gardens," he said, "and driven back into the town."

As he had addressed no one in particular, all three young men started off like three hawks in pursuit of the same prey. But he cried in his harsh voice: "Roland! Sheik of Aher!"

The two young men, when they heard their names, stopped their horses, which were tugging at their bits, and returned to their places beside the commander-in-chief. Mailly went on with a hundred sharpshooters, a like number of grenadiers and voltigeurs, and spurring his horse to a gallop, charged at their head.

Bonaparte had great confidence in the omens of war. It was for that reason that he had been so greatly displeased with Croisier's hesitation during their first engagement with the Bedouins, and had reproached him so bitterly for it.

He could see the movements of the troops through his glass, which was an excellent one, from where he stood.

He saw Eugene de Beauharnais and Croisier, who had not dared to speak to him since that unfortunate day at Jaffa, take command, the former of the grenadiers and the latter of the sharpshooters, while Mailly, with the utmost deference to his companions, led the voltigeurs.

If the commander-in-chief was looking for a ready omen he should have been content. While Roland was impatiently gnawing at his silver mounted riding-whip, and the Sheik of Aher on the contrary was watching the fray with all the patience and calmness of an Arab, Bonaparte saw the three detachments pass through the ruins of a village, a Turkish cemetery, and a little wood whose freshness plainly showed that it was watered by a spring, and hurl themselves upon the enemy in spite of the brisk firing of the Arnauts and the Albanians, whom he recognized by their magnificent gold embroidered costumes and their long silver-mounted rifles, and rout them at the first charge.

The firing on the French side began vigorously, and continued with increasing vigor, while above it they could hear the loud explosion of the hand-grenades, which the French soldiers threw with their hands, and with which they tormented the fugitives.

They all arrived about the same time at the foot of the ramparts; but the posterns being closed behind the Mussulmans, and the walls being enveloped with a girdle of fire, the three hundred Frenchmen were forced to beat a retreat, after having killed about one hundred and fifty of the enemy.

The three young men had displayed marvellous gallantry, and had performed prodigies of valor in their emulation of each other.

Eugene had killed an Arnaut, who was a head taller than he, in a hand-to-hand encounter; Mailly had approached within ten paces of a group which was making a stand, had discharged both barrels of his pistol at them, and had then rejoined his own men with a single bound. Croisier, for his part, had sabred two Arabs who had attacked him at the same time, cutting open the head of one

of them and breaking the blade of his sabre in the breast of the second, and had returned with the bloody hilt dangling from his wrist.

Bonaparte turned to the Sheik of Aher and said: "Give me your sword in exchange for mine." And he detached his own sword from his belt and handed it to the Sheik.

The latter kissed the hilt, and hastily handed him his own.

"Roland," said Bonaparte, "go and present my compliments to Eugene and De Mailly; as for Croisier, you will simply say to him: 'Here is a sword which the commander-in-chief has sent you. He has been watching you.'"

Roland set off at a gallop. The young men to whom Bonaparte had sent these congratulations leaped in their saddles for joy, and embraced each other. Croisier, like the Sheik of Aher, kissed the hilt of the sword which had been sent him, threw away the scabbard and broken hilt of the old one, and put the one Bonaparte had given him at his belt, saying: "Thank the commander-in-chief for me, and say to him that he will have reason to be satisfied with me at the first assault."

The entire army had gradually ascended the hill where Bonaparte was stationed like an equestrian statue. The soldiers shouted with delight when they saw their comrades drive the Maugrabins before them as the wind scatters the sand of the sea. Like Bonaparte, the army could see no great difference between the fortifications of Saint-Jean-d'Acre and those of Jaffa; and, like Bonaparte, they did not doubt that the city would be taken at the second or third assault.

The French were ignorant that there were two men within the walls of Saint-Jean-d'Acre who were worth more in themselves than a whole army of Mussulmans.

They were Sidney Smith, the English Admiral who commanded the "Tiger" and the "Theseus," which were gracefully cradled on the waters of the Gulf of Carmel, and Colonel Phélippeaux, who had charge of the defensive

works and the fortress of Djezzar the Butcher. Phélippeaux had been Bonaparte's friend and schoolfellow at Brienne, his rival at college and in his mathematical successes. Fortune, chance, or accident had now cast his lot among Bonaparte's foes.

Sidney Smith, whom the exiles of the 18th Fructidor had met at the Temple, had by a strange freak of fate escaped from his prison and reached London, where he resumed his place in the English army just at the time of Bonaparte's departure from Toulon.

It was Phélippeaux who had undertaken the rescue of Sidney Smith, and he had succeeded in his daring enterprise. False orders had been prepared, under the pretext of removing the captive from one prison to another. A stamped fac-simile of the minister of police's signature had been obtained at a heavy price. From whom? From him perhaps; who knows?

Under the name of Loger, and attired in an adjutant-general's uniform, Sidney Smith's friend had presented himself at the prison and exhibited his false order to the clerk. He examined it closely, and was forced to admit that it was correct in every particular. But he said: "You will need a guard of at least six men for a prisoner of such importance."

The pretended adjutant-general said: "For a man of such importance I shall need only his word." Then, turning to the prisoner, he added: "Commodore, you are a military man as well as I; your parole, that you will not seek to escape, will suffice for me. If you will give it I shall need no escort."

And Sidney Smith, like the honorable Englishman that he was, would not lie even to escape. He replied: "Sir, if it will satisfy you, I will promise to follow you wherever you may go."

And Adjutant-general Loger escorted Sidney Smith to England. These two men were now turned loose upon Bonaparte.

Phélippeaux undertook the defence of the fortress as we have said; Sidney Smith was to provide the arms and the soldiers.

And there, where Bonaparte expected to find only a stupid Turk in command, as at Gaza and Jafia, he found all the science of a compatriot, and all the hatred of an Englishman.

That same evening Bonaparte ordered Sanson, the chief of the engineering brigade, to reconnoitre the counterscarp. The latter waited until it was very dark. It was a moonless night well suited to such operations. He set out alone, traversed the ruined village, and the gardens from which the Arabs had been dislodged and driven in the morning. Seeing a black mass ahead which could be nothing else than the fortress, he got down on his hands and knees to feel the ground step by step. Just as he discovered a more rapid angle which made him believe that the moat was without facing, he was discovered by a sentinel whose eyes were probably accustomed to the darkness, or who in common with other men shared that propensity of the animals which enables them to see in the dark.

His cry "Who goes there?" rang out in the darkness.

Sanson did not reply. The cry was repeated a second, then a third time; a shot followed, and the ball shattered the outstretched hand of the general of the engineers. In spite of his terrible sufferings the officer made no sound; he crawled back again, thinking that he had studied the moat sufficiently, and made his report to Bonaparte.

The trench was begun on the following day. They took advantage of the gardens which were the ancient moats of Ptolemais, whose history we will relate later, as we did that of Jaffa.

They used an aqueduct which crossed the glacis, and in ignorance of the fatal support which Djezzar possessed to the undoing of the French, they gave the trench but three feet of depth.

When the giant Kléber saw the trench he shrugged his

shoulders and said to Bonaparte: "That is a fine trench, general: it will scarcely reach to my knees."

On the 23d of March Sidney Smith captured the two large vessels which were bringing Bonaparte his heavy artillery and the army its supplies. The French watched this capture without being able to prevent it, and found themselves in the strange position of besiegers being fought with their own weapons.

On the 25th they made a breach and attempted an assault, but were stopped by the counterscarp and the ditch.

On the 26th of March, the besieged, led by no less a personage than Djezzar Pasha himself, attempted a sortie to destroy the works which had already been begun. But being charged with the bayonet, they were at once repulsed and were obliged to retreat within the gates of the city.

Although the French battery consisted of only four twelve-pounders, eight eight-pounders and four howitzers, this feeble battery was unmasked on the 28th, and made a breach in the tower against which the principal attack was directed. Although of heavier calibre than those of the French, Djezzar's cannon were silenced by the enemy, and the towers offered a practicable breach at three o'clock in the afternoon.

A cry of joy burst from the French when they saw the wall crumble and caught a glimpse of the interior. The grenadiers, who had been the first to enter Jaffa, excited by the memory, and thinking that it would be no more difficult to take Acre than it had been to take Jaffa, asked with one accord to be allowed to enter the breach.

Bonaparte had been in the trench with his staff ever since the morning; yet he hesitated to give the order for the assault. However, egged on by Captain Mailly, who told him that he could no longer restrain the grenadiers, Bonaparte decided, and, in spite of himself, the words escaped him: "Well, go then!"

The grenadiers of the sixty-ninth brigade, led by Mailly, dashed at once into the breach; but to their great astonish-

ment where they had expected to find the slope of the moat, they found an escarpment twelve feet high. Then came the cry, "Ladders! Ladders!"

Ladders were thrown into the breach, the grenadiers leaped from the top of the counterscarp down to them, and Mailly seized the first ladder and threw it into the breach; twenty more were at once placed beside the first one.

But the breach was filled with Arnauts and Albanians, who fired at close range, and even rolled down stones upon their assailants. Half the ladders were broken, and in falling carried down those who had mounted upon them. Mailly was severely wounded and fell from the top to the bottom of his. The fire of the besieged was redoubled; the grenadiers were obliged to retreat, and to use the ladders with which they had hoped to scale the breach to climb up the counterscarp again.

Mailly, who was wounded in the foot and could not walk, begged his soldiers to take him with them. One of them put him on his shoulders, and fell with a bullet through the head a moment later. A second took up the wounded man and carried him to the foot of a ladder where he fell with a broken thigh. Eager to put themselves in safety, they abandoned him, and they could hear his voice crying, while no one stopped to reply to him: "At least make an end of me with a bullet, if you cannot save me."

Poor Mailly had not long to suffer. The moats were no sooner evacuated by the French soldiers than the Turks swarmed down into them, and cut off the heads of all who were left.

Djezzar thought to bestow a suitable gift upon Sidney Smith; he had all these heads put in a sack and sent to the English commodore. Sidney Smith merely looked sadly at the ghastly trophy and said: "This is what it means to be allied with barbarians."

CHAPTER VI

PTOLEMAIS

HOWEVER indifferent Bonaparte was in regard to Jerusalem, having passed within twenty miles of it without tarrying to visit it, he was none the less interested in the ground on which he stood. Being unable, or not having cared to do as Alexander did at the time of his conquest of India, to go out of his way to visit the high-priest of Jerusalem, he regarded it as some compensation to stand upon the ancient site of Ptolemais, and to set up his tent where Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Philippe-Auguste had set up theirs.

Far from being indifferent to his historical surroundings, his heart rejoiced in it; and he had chosen the little hill where he had watched the fight on the first day as his headquarters, confident that the heroes who had preceded him had placed their banners on the same spot.

But he, the first of the leaders of political crusades, following the banner of his own fortune and leaving behind him all the religious beliefs which had led millions of men to the same place, from Godfrey de Bouillon to Saint Louis —he, on the contrary, brought in his train the science of the eighteenth century, of Volney and Dupuis; or, in other words, scepticism.

While caring little for Christian traditions, he was on the other hand deeply interested in historical legends.

The very evening of the unfortunate assault in which poor Mailly had perished by the same death as his brother, he assembled his officers and generals in his tent, and ordered Bourrienne to take the few books which composed his library from the boxes. Unfortunately it contained but few historical works relating to Syria. He had only Plutarch, the lives of Cicero, Pompey, Alexander and Antony;

and in the way of political literature he had only the Old and New Testaments and a Mythology.

He gave each of the books which we have just named to the most literary of his generals or his young friends, and then called upon the historical reminiscences of the others, which, combined with his own, formed the only information which he could obtain in that desert country. Thus he was but incompletely informed. We who, more fortunate than he, have the literature of the Crusades before our eyes, can raise the veil of centuries for our readers, and give them the history of this little corner of the earth, from the time when it fell to the share of the tribe of Asher in the distribution of the Promised Land, until the day when Richard Cœur-de-Lion endeavored to take it for the third time from the Saracens.

Its old name was Acco, meaning "burning sands," and the Arabs still call it Acca. Made tributary to Egypt by the kings of the Greek dynasty of Ptolemy, who inherited Alexandria upon the death of the conqueror of the Indies, it bore the name of Ptolemais about one hundred and six years before the birth of Christ.

Vespasian, when preparing his expedition against Judea, spent three months at Ptolemais, and held court there for the kings and princes of the adjacent countries.

It was there that Titus saw Berenice, daughter of Agrippa I., and fell in love with her.

But Bonaparte had nothing relating to this period save a tragedy of Racine's, fragments of which he was wont to make Talma declaim with great frequency.

The Acts of the Apostles says: "From Tyre we came to Ptolemais, where our voyage ended, and having saluted our brethren, we abode one day with them." As you know, Saint Paul says that, and it was he who came from Tyre to Ptolemais.

The first siege of Ptolemais by the Crusaders began in 1189. Boah-Eddin, an Arab historian, says, in speaking of the Christians, that they were so numerous that God

alone could number them. But on the other hand a Christian author, one Gauthier Vinisauf, chronicler of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, assures us that Saladin's army was more numerous than that of Darius.

After the battle of Tiberius (of which we shall have occasion to speak in describing the battle of Mount Tabor), Guy de Lusignan, having escaped from captivity, laid siege to Jerusalem, whose fortifications had just been rebuilt. Strong towers defended it on the seaward coast. One was called the Tower of the Flies, because the pagans offered up their sacrifices there, and the smell of the human flesh attracted the flies. The other was called the Accursed Tower, because, says Gauthier Vinisauf in his "Itinerary of King Richard," it was in this tower that the pieces of silver were struck for which Judas sold Christ.

It was by this very same old "accursed tower" that the Saracens made their way into the city in 1291.

Although he was ignorant of the fact, that was the very tower which Bonaparte had so unsuccessfully attacked. Walter Scott, in one of his best novels, "The Talisman," has related an incident of this famous siege, which lasted two years. The Arab histories, much less well-known than the French, contain some interesting data concerning this siege.

Ibn-Alatir, one of Saladin's physicians, has, among others, left us an interesting account of the Mussulman camp.

"In the midst of the camp (it is Ibn-Alatir who is speaking) was a vast square where the farriers' forges were located. There were one hundred and forty of them. We can judge of the rest of the camp in proportion.

"In a single kitchen there were twenty-nine pots, each one large enough to hold a sheep. I myself counted the number of shops registered as markets. I counted seven thousand. You must know that they are not like our city shops. A shop in a camp would make a hundred of ours. All were well supplied. I have heard that when Saladin changed his camp to retire to Karouba, although the dis-

tance was short, that it cost one butter-merchant seventy gold pieces to move his shop. As for the old and new clothes shops, they were something beyond description. There were more than one thousand baths in the camp. They were kept by Africans, and it cost a piece of silver to take a bath.

"The camp of the Christians was like a fortified city. All the trades and all the mechanical arts were represented there."

The markets were supplied with meat, fish and fruits as completely as the capital of a great kingdom could have been. There were even churches with bells there. Therefore it was usually at the hour of mass that the Saracens attacked the camp.

"A poor English priest," says Michaud, "built a chapel dedicated to the dead at his own expense on the plain of Ptolemais. There was a vast plot of consecrated ground around the chapel, whither he followed the remains of more than one hundred thousand pilgrims, chanting their burial service himself. Forty lords of Lubeck and Bremen made tents with the sails of their vessels for the poor soldiers of their country and took care of them in sickness. This was the origin of a celebrated order which still exists under the name of the Teutonic Order."

Whoever has travelled in the East, in Egypt, or to Constantinople, has made the acquaintance of the famous Turkish Punchinello, called Caragous. The exploits of our Punchinello are as nothing when compared to his; and he, the cynic of cynics, would blush at the most innocent jokes of his turbaned colleague.

It was during this siege, in which Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Saladin played such an important part, that the ancestor of the modern Caragous appeared. He was an Emir.

Another historical date, no less important to verify, is that of the first bill of exchange. Emad-Eddin speaks of an ambassador of the Caliph of Bagdad who was the bearer of two loads of naphtha and reeds, and who brought with

him five persons skilled in the distillation and the use of naphtha. It is admitted that naphtha and Greek fire are one and the same. Furthermore, this same ambassador brought a note of hand for twenty thousand pieces of gold on the merchants of Bagdad. Thus the bill of exchange and the note of hand are not inventions of modern commerce, as they were used in the East in the year 1191.

It was during this two years' siege that the besieged invented the *Zenbourech*, which the popes afterward forbade the Christians to use. It was a sort of arrow about twelve inches long and four inches thick. It had four sides, an iron point, and a feathered head. Vinisauf relates that this dreadful arrow, thrown by the instrument which was used to shoot it, would at times pass through the bodies of two men armed with shields, and then bury itself in the wall.

It was toward the close of this siege that the great dispute arose which alienated Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Leopold, duke of Austria. Cœur-de-Lion, who sometimes returned from an assault so riddled with arrows that he looked like a pin-cushion, as his historian says, was justly proud of his courage and strength. Leopold, who was equally proud, had his flag hoisted over the city which he had just entered with Richard. Richard might have put his own flag beside that of Duke Leopold, but he preferred to take down the Austrian flag and throw it into a ditch. All the Germans revolted and wished to attack the king in his quarters; but Leopold opposed this.

A year later, as Richard did not wish to return to his domain through France, owing to his differences with Philippe-Auguste, he travelled through Austria in disguise; but he was recognized in spite of it, made prisoner, and incarcerated in the castle of Durenstein. For two years no one knew what had become of him; this thunderbolt of war had been extinguished like a meteor. There were no traces left of Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

A gentleman of Arras named Blondel undertook to find him; and one day, without having the least idea that he was

so near the English king, he sat down at the foot of an old castle, and began to sing the first verse of a couplet which he had composed with Richard. Richard, by the way, was a bit of a poet in his leisure moments. When he heard the first verse of this couplet which he and Blondel had composed, he suspected the latter's presence and replied with the second.

The rest of the story, which has furnished Grétry with a theme for his masterpiece, is well known.

Ptolemais surrendered to the Christians, as we have said, after a siege of two years. The garrison were promised their lives on condition that they surrender the True Cross, which was captured at the battle of Tiberias. It is needless to say that, once at liberty, the Saracens forgot all about their promise.

A hundred years later, Ptolemais was recaptured from the Christians, never to be given up to them again.

This siege also had its chroniclers, its sudden turns of fortune, which rent all Europe and Asia, and its devotion, which was marked in more than one instance by heroism and self-abnegation.

Saint Antonius relates a curious legend in reference to this siege.

"There was," he says, "a celebrated monastery of nuns at Saint-Jean-d'Acre belonging to the order of Saint Claire. When the Saracens entered the town, the abbess ordered the convent bell to be rung, and assembled all the community.

"Addressing the nuns, she said: 'My dear daughters and beloved sisters, we have promised the Lord Jesus Christ to be his spotless wives. We are at this moment in twofold danger—danger to our lives and danger to our purity. Those enemies of our bodies and of our souls as well are close at hand, who, after dishonoring those whom they meet, run them through with the sword. If we cannot escape them by flight, at least we can do so by taking a painful but invincible resolve. It is woman's beauty which attracts men most frequently. Let us despoil our-

selves of this attraction. Let us use our faces as a means of preserving our moral beauty, our chastity, intact. I will set you the example. Let those who wish to appear spotless before their spotless Spouse imitate their mistress!'

"Having spoken thus, she cut off her nose with a knife. The others followed her example, and courageously disfigured themselves in order to appear more beautiful in the eyes of the Lord.

"By this means they preserved their purity," continues Saint Antonius; "for the Mussulmans, upon seeing their bleeding faces, experienced naught save horror for them, and contented themselves with merely taking their lives."

CHAPTER VII

THE SCOUTS

DURING this evening when Bonaparte had assembled all his staff, not as a council of war or to formulate a plan of battle, but as a literary and historical committee, several messengers arrived for the Sheik of Aher to warn him that the Pasha of Damascus was preparing to cross the Jordan with an army, in order to force Bonaparte to raise the siege of Saint-Jean-d'Acre.

This army, which, according to the always exaggerated reports of the Arabs, had an immense baggage train with it, was to cross the Jordan at Jacob's Bridge.

On the other hand, Djezzar's agents had visited all the sea-coast of Said, and this contingent had joined those of Aleppo and Damascus, with the greater feeling of security since the messengers of the Pasha had everywhere spread the report that the French were a mere handful of men, that they had no artillery, and that it would suffice for the Pasha of Damascus to show himself and unite with Djezzar to exterminate Bonaparte and his army.

At this news, Bonaparte threw down the volume of Plu-

tarch which he was reading and called for Junot, Vial and Murat. He sent Vial north to take possession of Sour—the ancient Tyre. He despatched Murat northeast to make sure of the Fort of Zaphet; and Junot south, with orders to take possession of Nazareth, and to take observation of the surrounding country from the elevated position of this village.

Vial crossed the mountains at Cape Blanco, and came in sight of Sour on the 3d of April. The French general, from his post at the crest of a little hill, could see the frightened inhabitants leaving the town in disorder with every sign of great terror. He entered the town without any opposition, promised peace and protection to the people who had remained, reassured them, persuaded them to go and look for those who had run away, and at the end of three or four days had the pleasure of seeing them all in their own homes again. Vial returned to Saint-Jean-d'Acre on the 6th of April, leaving a garrison of two hundred men at Sour.

Murat was equally fortunate with his expedition. He made his way to Fort Zaphet, where a few shots drove away half of the garrison. The other half, which was composed of Maugrabins, offered to put themselves under Murat's orders. From there he went to the Jordan, reconnoitred its right bank, took a look at the Lake of Tiberias, and, leaving a French garrison well-provisioned at the fort, he returned with his Maugrabins on the 6th of April.

Junot had taken Nazareth—our Saviour's birthplace—and had encamped there, half in and half out of the village, awaiting fresh orders from Bonaparte, who had told him not to return until he was recalled.

But Murat's endeavors to reassure the commander-in-chief were all vain. His presentiments, and above all the insistence of the Sheik of Aher, gave him no rest in regard to this invisible army which was marching against him. Therefore he accepted the Sheik's offer to go as a scout to the Lake of Tiberias.

Roland, who was weary of remaining in the camp, where, being constantly under Bonaparte's eyes, he could not risk his life as he wished, asked leave to accompany the Sheik in his explorations. They set forth that same night, taking advantage of the coolness and darkness to reach the plain of Esdrelon, which offered them the double shelter of the mountains of Nablos to the right and those of Nazareth to the left.

"On the 7th of April, the promontory on which Saint-Jean-d'Acre is built, the ancient Ptolemais, seemed to be wrapped in as much thunder and lightning as was Mount Sinai on the day when the Lord appeared to Moses from the burning bush.

"Whence came those reports which shook the coast of Syria as with an earthquake? Whence came that smoke which covered the Gulf of Carmel with a cloud as thick as though Mount Elias had become a burning volcano?"

We began the first chapter of the new narrative with these words. The other chapters have only served to explain what had preceded this Syrian campaign—the eighth, and probably the last Crusade.

Bonaparte was in fact beginning his second assault. He had taken advantage of the return of Vial and Murat to try his luck once more. He was in the trench scarcely a hundred paces from the ramparts. Near him stood General Caffarelli, with whom he was talking. The latter was standing with his hand on his hip, to help balance himself on his wooden leg. The joint of his elbow was just visible above the trench. The peak of Bonaparte's three-cornered hat was also visible above the trench, and it was carried away with a bullet. He stooped down to pick it up, and as he did so noticed the general's position, and, drawing near to him, he said: "General, those Arnauts and Albanians are excellent marksmen, as my hat has just discovered. Take care that they do not do to your arm what they have just done to my hat."

Caffarelli made a disdainful movement. The gallant general had left one of his legs on the banks of the Rhine, and he did not seem alarmed at the prospect of leaving some other portion of his body on the banks of the Kerdaneah. He did not move.

A moment later Bonaparte saw him start and turn round with his arm hanging lifeless at his side. A bullet had struck his elbow and broken the joint. At the same moment Bonaparte raised his eyes and discovered Croisier, not ten paces from them, standing on the edge of the trench. It was useless bravado. Bonaparte therefore called out: "Come down, Croisier, come down! You have no business there. Come down: I wish it."

"Did you not say in public one day that I was a coward?"

"I was wrong, Croisier," replied the general, "and you have proved to me since that I was mistaken. Come down."

Croisier started to obey, but he fell down instead. A bullet had broken his thigh.

"Larrey! Larrey!" cried Bonaparte, stamping his foot impatiently, "here, come here; I have some work for you."

Larrey came up. They laid Croisier on some muskets. As for Caffarelli, he walked away, leaning on the arm of the chief surgeon.

Let us leave the assault, begun under such gloomy auspices, to take its course, and cast our eyes on the beautiful plain of Esdrelon, covered with flowers, and the river Kishon, whose course is marked by a long extent of rose-laurels.

Two horsemen were carelessly riding along the banks of this river. One of them, dressed in the green uniform of the mounted chasseurs, with his sabre at his side and his three-cornered hat on his head, was fanning himself with a perfumed handkerchief, as he might have done with a fan. The tri-colored cockade in his hat showed that he belonged to the French army.

The other wore a red cap tied around his head with a piece of chamois skin. A brilliantly colored head-dress fell

over his shoulders. He was completely enveloped in a burnoose of white cashmere, which, when it opened, revealed a rich Oriental caftan of green velvet embroidered with gold. He had a party-colored silk belt, its shades arranged with that marvellous taste which is only to be found in Eastern stuffs. Two pistols with silver-gilt handles wrought like the finest lace were stuck into this belt on one side. His sword alone was of French make. He had wide trousers of red satin tucked into green boots embroidered like the caftan, and of the same material. Besides all this he carried a long, slender lance, light as a reed and strong as a bar of iron, tipped at the end with a bunch of ostrich feathers.

The two young men halted in a bend of the river, in the shade of a little grove of palms; and there, laughing pleasantly together as befitted travelling companions, they began to prepare to eat their breakfast, which consisted of a few pieces of biscuit which the young Frenchman took from his holsters and dipped for a moment in the river.

As for the Arab, he began to look around and above him. Then without saying a word he attacked one of the palm-trees, whose tender porous wood yielded readily to the sharp steel.

"In truth that is a good sword which the commander-in-chief gave me a few days ago," he said; "and I hope before long to try it on something besides palm-trees."

"I should think so," replied the Frenchman, munching the biscuit with his teeth; "that was a gift of Versailles manufacture. But are you destroying that poor tree just to try the temper of the blade?"

"Look!" replied the Arab, pointing upward.

"Faith!" replied the Frenchman, "we shall have a better breakfast than I thought, for it is a date-palm."

And just then the tree fell with a crash, bringing enough fully ripened dates for two or three meals within their reach. They began to attack with the appetites of twenty-five the manna which the Lord had sent. They were in the midst of their meal when the Arab's horse began to neigh.

The Arab uttered an exclamation, darted out of the little grove and scanned the plain of Esdrelon, in the middle of which they had paused to breakfast.

"What is it?" asked the Frenchman, nonchalantly.

"One of ours riding a fast mare. We shall probably learn what we want to know from him."

He returned and seated himself near his companion, without disturbing himself about his horse, which set off at a fast gallop to meet the oncoming rider. Ten minutes later they heard the gallop of two horses.

A Druse, who had recognized his chief's horse, stopped near the group of palms, where the presence of a second horse indicated that the party had stopped, even if there were no encampment.

"Azib!" called the Arab chief.

The Druse leaped from his horse, throwing the reins upon its neck, and advanced toward the sheik with his hands crossed on his breast and bowing low. The sheik addressed a few words in Arabic to him.

"I was not mistaken," said the Sheik of Aher, turning to his companion. "The advance-guard of the Pasha of Damascus has just crossed Jacob's Bridge."

"We will go and see," returned Roland, whom our readers have doubtless recognized from his indifference to danger.

"There is no need," returned the sheik; "Azib has seen."

"Yes," returned Roland, "but perhaps Azib has not seen correctly. I shall feel more certain when I have seen for myself. This great mountain which looks like a pie must be Mount Tabor. The Jordan is therefore just beyond it. We are within a mile of it. Let us go and look; then we shall know for ourselves what to think."

And without stopping to see whether the Sheik of Aher was following him, Roland leaped upon his horse, which was refreshed by its halt, and galloped swiftly away in the direction of Mount Tabor. A minute later he caught the gallop of the others behind him.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS OF NAZARETH

HE RODE for three miles over the beautiful plain of Esdrelon—the most immense and the most celebrated in Palestine after that of the Jordan.

In other days it was styled the Paradise and the Granary of Syria, the Plain of Jezreel, the Field of Esdrela, the Plain of Mejiddo. It is mentioned in the Bible under all these names. It witnessed the defeat of the Midianites and the Amalekites by Gideon. It saw Saul encamped by the fountain of Jezreel to fight the Philistines, who were assembled at Aphek. It was in this plain that poor Naboth had his vineyard near the palace of the rich Ahab, and there the infamous Jezebel had him stoned to death as a blasphemer in order to obtain possession of his inheritance. It was there that Joram had his heart pierced by an arrow hurled by the hand of Jehu. And, finally, it was almost on the same spot where the young men had breakfasted, that Jezebel, by Jehu's orders, was thrown from a window, and her body was devoured by dogs.

In the Middle Ages this plain which has seen so many sights was called the Plain of Sabas. To-day it is called Merdjibn-Amer, which means "Pasturage of the sons of Amer." It extends for about fifteen miles between the mountains of Gilboa and those of Nazareth. Mount Tabor rises at its extreme end, and it was toward that that the three riders were galloping without giving a thought to the celebrity of the ground which their horses were trampling with their feet.

Mount Tabor is accessible on all sides, and particularly so toward Fouli, by way of which they were approaching.

They were obliged to climb the summit—an easy task for their Arab horses—before they could look over the Jordan,

which from any lower elevation obscured their view of the Jordan and the Lake of Tiberias.

But as they ascended, the horizon broadened around them. Soon, like an immense blue cloth framed in golden-hued sand on one side and hills of tawny verdure on the other, they discovered the Lake of Tiberias, joined to the Dead Sea by the Jordan, which stretches across the bare plain like a yellow ribbon sparkling in the sun. Their eyes were riveted in that direction by the sight of the whole army of the Pasha of Damascus, which was following the eastern bank of the lake and crossing Jacob's Bridge. The entire advance-guard had already disappeared between the lake and the mountain of Tiberias. It was evidently on its way to the village.

It was impossible for the young men to compute, even approximately, the number of this vast concourse. The cavalry alone, marching in the fantastic fashion which the Orientals affect, covered miles of ground. Although the young men were twelve miles away, they could catch the gleam of the weapons, and to them flashes of gold seemed to dart up through the clouds of dust from under the horses' feet.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon. There was no time to lose. The Sheik of Aher and Azib, by resting an hour or two near the river Kishon, could reach Bonaparte's camp about daybreak or a little before, and give him warning.

As for Roland, he undertook to go to Nazareth and put Junot on his guard, intending to remain and fight with him there, where he could have more liberty of action.

The three young men descended the mountain rapidly. They separated at its foot, the two Arabs striking directly across the plain of Esdrelon, and Roland spurring straight for Nazareth, whose white houses, lying like a nest of doves amid the sombre verdure of the mountains, he had seen from the summit of Mount Tabor.

The traveller who has visited Nazareth will remember

what abominable roads lead to it. They are bordered with precipices, now on the right, now on the left, and the beautiful flowers which grow wherever there is earth to hold their roots, add to the attractions of the desert, but do not lessen its dangers. There are white lilies, yellow narcissi, blue crocuses, and roses whose freshness and sweetness are beyond description.

Does not the Hebrew word "nezer," which is the root of Nazareth, mean flower?

Owing to the winding road, Roland caught several glimpses of Nazareth before he finally arrived there. When he was within ten minutes of the place he met a detachment of the grenadiers of the nineteenth brigade and making himself known, he inquired whether the general was in Nazareth or its environs.

The general was in Nazareth and had visited its outposts not an hour ago. Roland was obliged to let his horse walk. The noble animal had made thirty-five or forty miles without any rest other than that at breakfast; but as Roland was now sure of finding the general he had no need to force him.

He found a squad of dragoons at the first house in the village, commanded by one of his friends, Major Desnoyers. He left his horse in charge of a soldier and inquired where he could find General Junot's quarters.

It was then about half-past five in the evening. Desnoyers looked at the sun, which was just about to set behind the mountains of Nablos, and replied with a laugh: "This is the hour when the women of Nazareth go to the springs for water. General Junot is probably on his way to the spring."

Roland shrugged his shoulders. Evidently he thought that the general's place was elsewhere, and that he had others to review besides the beautiful daughters of Nazareth. Nevertheless he followed the directions given him and soon reached the other end of the village.

The spring was situated some ten minutes' walk beyond the last house. The avenue leading to it was lined on either

side with immense cactus-trees which formed a wall. Roland espied the general a short distance from the spring, where he with his two aides-de-camp followed with his eyes the women who were going and coming.

Junot recognized him at once as General Bonaparte's ordnance officer. The commander-in-chief's partiality for Roland was well-known, and would in itself have sufficed to win him smiles from every one; but his courteous familiarity, and daring courage, which were proverbial in the army, would have won him friends, even though he had possessed a much smaller share of the general's favor.

Junot came to meet him with outstretched hand. Roland, a strict adherent of the proprieties, saluted him as his superior officer; for he dreaded above all that they should think that he attributed the commander-in-chief's kindness to him to his own merit.

"Do you bring us good news, my dear Roland?" asked Junot.

"Yes, general; since I come to announce to you the presence of the enemy," replied Roland.

"Faith!" said Junot, "next to the sight of these beautiful girls, who carry their jugs as if they were each a veritable Princess Nausica, I know of nothing that would be more agreeable to me than a glimpse of the enemy. Look, Roland; see what a haughty air the wenches have. Would you not say they were so many antique goddesses? And when shall we look for the enemy?"

"As soon as you please, general, since they are not more than fifteen or eighteen miles from here."

"Do you know what they answer when you tell them that they are beautiful? 'The Virgin Mary wills it so.' This is really the first time since we came to Syria that I have seen really beautiful women. Have you seen them —the enemy, I mean?"

"With my own eyes, general."

"Where were they coming from? Where are they going? What do they want of us?"

"They are coming from Damascus, and I presume they want to defeat us. They are going to Saint-Jean-d'Acre, if I am not mistaken, to raise the siege."

"Only that? Oh, we will cut them off! Are you going to stay with us, or return to Bonaparte?"

"I shall stay with you, general. I have a great longing to try a turn with the rascals. We are dying of boredom at the siege. Except for the two or three sorties which Djezzar has had the stupidity to make we have had nothing to vary the monotony."

"Well," said Junot, "I can promise you that you will find some variety by to-morrow. By the way, I forgot to ask you how many there were?"

"Ah, general, I will reply to you as an Arab would. As well try to count the sands of the sea! There must be at least twenty-five or thirty thousand of them."

Junot scratched his head.

"The devil!" he said, "there is not much to be done with the few men I have with me."

"How many have you?" asked Roland.

"Just a hundred men more than the three hundred Spartans. But we can do what they did, and that will not be so bad. However, to-morrow morning will be time enough to think of all that. Would you like to see the curiosities of the town, or would you like some supper?"

"Well," said Roland, "it is true that we are in Nazareth, and that interesting relics should not be scarce; but I will not conceal from you, general, that my stomach is just at present more impatient than my eyes. I breakfasted this morning near the Kishon off some hardtack and some dates; and I confess that I am both hungry and thirsty."

"If you will give me the pleasure of supping with me we will try to appease your appetite. As for your thirst, you will never find a better opportunity to quench it." Then, addressing a young girl, he said in Arabic: "Water! Thy brother is thirsty." And he pointed to Roland.

She drew near, tall and stern, her tunic with its long

flowing sleeves leaving her arms bare. She tipped the jug which she was carrying on her right shoulder until it was on a level with her left hand. Then with a most graceful motion she offered the water to Roland.

Roland drank deeply, not because the girl was beautiful but because the water was fresh.

"Has my brother drank sufficiently?" asked the girl.

"Yes," replied Roland in the same language, "and thy brother thanks thee."

The young girl bowed, replaced her jug on her right shoulder, and continued on her way to the village.

"Do you know that you speak Arabic very fluently?" asked Junot, laughing.

"Was I not wounded and a prisoner for a month with those rogues," asked Roland, "at the time of the insurrection of Cairo? I had to learn a little Arabic in spite of myself. And since the commander-in-chief has found out that I can chatter a little in the language of the Prophet, he is determined to use me as his interpreter on all occasions."

"Upon my word," said Junot, "if I thought I could learn Arabic as well as you have in a month, I would pay the same price, and get myself wounded and taken prisoner to-morrow."

"Well, general," said Roland, with that harsh, nervous laugh peculiar to him, "if I might offer my advice to you it would be to learn some other language and in a different manner. Let us go to supper, general."

And Roland started for the village without another glance at the beautiful Nazarenes whom Junot and his aides paused again and again to look upon.

Mailly seized the first ladder and threw it into the breach; twenty more were at once placed beside the first one.

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CHAPTER IX

THE BATTLE OF NAZARETH

AT DAWN the next day, about six o'clock in the morning, the drums beat and the trumpets sounded the call.

Roland had told Junot that the advance-guard of the Damascenes was on its way to Tiberias, and Junot, not wishing to give them time to besiege him in his mountain, crossed the ravine between the hills which rise around Nazareth and descend through the valley as far as the village of Cana, which he did not see until he was within three-quarters of a mile of it, for it was hidden behind a spur of the mountain.

The enemy might be either in the valley of Batouf or on the plain which lies at the foot of Mount Tabor. But in either case, as the French were coming down from the "high places," as Scripture has it, they were in no danger of being surprised; on the contrary, they were sure to see the enemy at a distance.

The soldiers were better versed in the miracle which Jesus performed at Cana than in any of his other miracles; and of all the places sanctified by his memory, Cana was the one that was the most firmly impressed upon their minds. For it was at the wedding at Cana that Jesus turned the water into wine. And although the soldiers were very happy on the days when they had water, it is self-evident that they would have been happier had there been any days on which they could have had wine.

It was also at Cana that Jesus performed that other miracle of which Saint John speaks:

There was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he had heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him and besought him

that he would come down and heal his son, for he was on the point of death.

Then Jesus said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe.

The nobleman said unto him, Sir, come down, lest my child die.

Jesus said unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth. And the man believed the word which Jesus had spoken unto him and went his way.

And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

Junot found the Sheik El-Beled at the entrance of the village of Cana, who was coming to meet him to ask him to go no further, as he said there were two or three thousand of the enemy's cavalry on the plain.

Junot had one hundred and fifty grenadiers of the nineteenth brigade of the line, a hundred and fifty carabineers of the second light, and about a hundred cavalry commanded by Major Duvivier, belonging to the fourteenth dragoons. This made exactly four hundred men, as he had said on the previous night.

He thanked the Sheik El-Beled, and to the latter's great admiration he continued on his way. When he reached one of the branches of the little river which takes its source at Cana, he followed its bank. As he came to the pass which separates Loubi from the mountains of Cana, he saw two or three thousand cavalry divided into several corps, who were galloping about between Loubi and Mount Tabor. To obtain a better idea of their position, he spurred his horse to a gallop and rode as far as the ruins of a little village on the crest of a hill, which the natives of the country called Meschanah.

But just then he caught sight of a second corps marching from the village of Loubi. It was composed of Mamelukes, Maugrabins, and Turcomans. This troop was almost as strong as the other, and Junot, with his four hundred men, had five thousand against him. Moreover, this troop was marching in a compact body, contrary to the custom of the

Orientals, and was advancing slowly and in good order. He could see a great many standards, banners and horses' tails in their ranks.

These horses' tails, which served as the ensigns of the pashas, had been the laughing stock of the French until they had learned the origin of this singular standard. Then they had heard that at the battle of Nicopolis, Bajazet, seeing that his standard had been captured by the Christians, with one blow had severed his horse's tail from his body, and putting it on a pike had rallied his soldiers around this novel oriflamme and won the battle, which had proved one of the most disastrous to Christianity which has ever been fought.

Junot was right in estimating that the troop which was marching in such good order was the only one to be feared. He sent fifty grenadiers to keep back the cavalry whom he had first seen, and whom he had recognized as Bedouins who would be content with harassing his troops during the fight. But he drew up a hundred grenadiers and the hundred and fifty carabineers in opposition to the regular force, keeping the hundred dragoons in reserve, in order to use them later where they might be most needed.

The Turks, when they saw this handful of men draw up to wait for them, thought that they were struck motionless with terror. They approached within pistol range; but then the grenadiers and the carabineers, each choosing his man, fired, and the whole front rank of the Turkish force fell, some of the bullets plowing their way to horses and men in the third and fourth lines. This volley created great confusion among the enemy, and gave the carabineers and grenadiers time to reload. But this time only the front rank fired, the second then passing forward their loaded guns and receiving the discharged ones in exchange.

This continuous fusillade made the Turks falter; but when they saw their own numbers, and the insignificant number of the enemy, they charged with loud shouts. This was the moment for which Roland was waiting. When

Junot ordered his two hundred and fifty men to form a hollow square, Roland, at the head of his hundred and fifty dragoons, dashed upon the troop, which was advancing in disorderly fashion, and took them in the flank.

The Turks were not accustomed to these straight sabres, which pierced them like lances at a distance, where their curved cimeters were of no use. The effect of this charge was terrible in consequence. The dragoons cut straight through the body of Mussulmans, coming out on the other side. They gave the square an opportunity to discharge their rifles, and then dashed into the furrow which the bullets had plowed; and riding with sabres held straight before them, enlarged the furrow until it seemed to burst, and the Turkish horsemen, instead of continuing to march with closed ranks, began to scatter all over the plain.

Roland had closed with the standard-bearer of one of the head chiefs. As he wore the curved sabre of the chasseurs instead of the straight one of the dragoons, he and his antagonist were on equal terms. Two or three times, letting the reins fall upon his horse's neck and guiding him with his legs, he carried his hand to his pistols; but this means of defence seemed to him unworthy. He urged his horse upon that of his adversary, and seized the man about the body, and the struggle continued, while the horses, recognizing each other as enemies, bit and tore savagely at each other. For a moment those who were surrounding the two adversaries paused; Frenchmen and Mussulmans waited to see the end. But Roland, loosening his girths, drove the spurs into his horse, which seemed to slip from under him, and his weight dragging upon the Mussulman, he fell head downward, hanging by the stirrups. In a second Roland was up again, his bloody sabre in one hand and the Turkish standard in the other. As for the Mussulman, he was dead, and his horse, spurred by a prick from Roland's sabre, dragged him into the ranks of his comrades, where he increased the disorder.

Meanwhile, the Arabs on the plain of Mount Tabor

hastened toward the firing. Two chiefs, who were better mounted, preceded them by about five hundred paces. Junot rode out alone to meet them, ordering his soldiers to leave them to him.

He halted a hundred paces in advance of the fifty whom he had sent as if in derision against the Arabs on the plain; and noticing that the two horsemen with whom he had to do were separated by about a hundred paces, he let his sabre hang by its knot, and took a pistol from his holster. He saw two flaming eyes between the ears of the horse who was coming at full speed against him, and (we have said that he was marvellously skilful with the pistol) he put a ball straight through their owner's forehead. The rider fell, and the horse, carried on by its own impetus, was caught by one of the fifty grenadiers, while the general, replacing the pistol in the holster, and seizing his sabre, cut off his second adversary's head with a single blow.

Then each officer, inspired by his general's example, left the ranks. Ten or twelve single combats like that which we have just described engaged the attention of the whole army, who applauded vigorously. The Turks were defeated in all.

The battle lasted from half-past eight in the morning until three in the afternoon, when Junot ordered a retreat into the mountains of Cana. When he came down in the morning he had seen a large plateau well-suited to his purpose, for he knew that, with his four hundred men, while he could make a brilliant fight he could not expect to win the victory. The battle had been fought; four hundred Frenchmen had held the ground against five thousand Turks for five hours; they had left eight hundred dead and three hundred wounded of the enemy upon the field of battle. They themselves had had five men killed and one wounded.

Junot gave orders that they should take the wounded man with them, and, as his leg was broken, they laid him upon a litter, which four of his comrades carried.

Roland mounted his horse again. He had exchanged his curved sabre for a straight one; and in his holsters he had

his pistols, with which he could cut a pomegranate flower at twenty paces. With Junot's two aides-de-camp he took command of the hundred dragoons who formed the general's cavalry; and the three young men in their amicable rivalry converted this errand of death into a pleasure party. Whether they were fighting hand-to-hand with the Turks with their swords, or whether, encouraged by their general's example, they contented themselves with using them as a target for their bullets, they filled the day with picturesque incidents which long furnished heroic anecdotes and amusing tales for the bivouac of the Army of the East.

Junot was sheltered from attack and secure in his position at four o'clock in the afternoon. He had established himself on his plateau, past which flowed one of the feeders of the little river which empties into the sea near Carmel, and was in communication with the Greek and Catholic priests of Cana and Nazareth. He could therefore afford to wait quietly for the reinforcements which Bonaparte would be sure to send him after he had been warned by the Sheik of Aher.

CHAPTER X

MOUNT TABOR

AS ROLAND had said, the Sheik of Aher reached the camp about daybreak. In accordance with his maxim, "Always wake me for bad news but never for good," Bonaparte had been awakened.

The sheik, when admitted to his presence, told him what he had seen, and that twenty-five or thirty thousand men had just crossed the Jordan and entered the territory of Tiberias.

When Bonaparte inquired what had become of Roland, he replied that the young aide-de-camp had volunteered to go and warn Junot, who was at Nazareth, and that there was a great plain at the foot of Tabor between the mountains of Nablos and that mountain in which twenty-five

thousand Turks could sleep without inconvenience. Bonaparte sent some one to wake Bourrienne, called for his map, and summoned Kléber.

In the latter's presence he bade the young Druse point out the exact place at which the Mussulmans had crossed the river, the road which they had followed, and that which he and the sheik had taken in returning to the camp.

"You will take your division," Bonaparte said to Kléber; "it should consist of about two thousand men. The sheik will serve as your guide, so that you may follow the same road as that which he chose for Roland. You will reach Safarie by the shortest route; you should be at Nazareth by to-morrow morning. Let each of your men carry enough water for the day. Although I see a river marked on the map, I fear that at this season it will be dried up. If possible give battle on the plain, either in front of or behind Mount Tabor, at Loubi or Fouli. We must take our revenge for the battle of Tiberias which Saladin won over Guy de Lusignan in 1187. See that the Turks lose nothing by waiting all these years. Do not worry about me; I will get there in time."

Kléber assembled his division, and bivouacked near Safarie that evening—Saint Anne and Saint Joachim inhabited that city, according to tradition.

That same evening he was in communication with Junot who had left an advance-guard at Cana, and gone on to Nazareth, for which he showed great partiality. He learned from him that the enemy had not left their position at Loubi, and that they could therefore be found at one of the two points which Bonaparte had indicated—that is, the one in front of Mount Tabor.

There was a village called Saïd-Jarra about three-quarters of a mile from Loubi, which was occupied by a portion of the Turkish army, about seven or eight thousand men in all. He ordered Junot to attack it with a part of his division, while he formed a square with the rest of the men, and charged the cavalry.

Two hours later the pasha's infantry were driven from Saïd-Jarra and the cavalry from Loubi.

The Turks, completely routed, fell back upon the Jordan in great disorder. Junot had two horses killed under him in this engagement. Having nothing better at hand than a dromedary, he mounted that, and soon found himself among the Turks, to whom he looked like a giant. The animal's hamstrings were cut and the dromedary fell, or rather sunk under him. Fortunately Roland had not lost sight of him; he came up with Junot's aide-de-camp, Teinturier—the same one whom Roland had found with him watching the damsels at Nazareth. They fell upon the mass surrounding Junot like a thunderbolt, opened a passage, and made their way to him. They placed him on the horse of a dead Mameluke, and all three, pistol in hand, pierced this living wall and reappeared in the midst of their soldiers, who had believed them to be dead, and who were hastening forward with no other object than that of recovering their dead bodies.

Kléber had come so fast that his army wagons had been unable to keep up with him, and they were unable to pursue the fugitives for lack of ammunition. He fell back upon Nazareth and fortified his position at Safarie.

On the 13th, Kléber sent scouts to reconnoitre the enemy's position. The Mamelukes of Ibrahim Bey, the Janissaries of Damascus, the Arabs of Aleppo, and the different tribes of Syria, had effected a junction with the people of Nablos; and all these different tribes were encamped in the plain of Loubi or Esdrelon.

Kléber informed the commander-in-chief of these details at once. He told him that he had reconnoitred the hostile army, that it amounted to about thirty thousand men, of which there were twenty thousand cavalry; and he announced that he proposed to attack this multitude with his twenty-five hundred men on the following day. He ended his letter with these words: "The enemy is exactly where you wanted him. Try to come to the jollification."

The Sheik of Aher was intrusted with this message; but,

as the plain was overrun with hostile riders, it was sent in triplicate by three different men over three different roads. Bonaparte received two of the three despatches—one at eleven o'clock at night, the other at one in the morning. The third messenger was never heard from.

Bonaparte fully intended to participate in the "jollification." He was eager for general action and a decisive battle which should drive all these hordes back, that they might not eventually crush him against the walls of Saint-Jean-d'Acre.

Murat was sent forward with a thousand infantry, one light piece of artillery, and a detachment of dragoons, at two o'clock in the morning. He had orders to march until he came to the Jordan, where he was to take possession of Jacob's Bridge, to prevent the retreat of the Turkish army. He had more than thirty miles to make.

Bonaparte started at three in the morning, taking every man with him who was not absolutely needed to keep the enemy within their walls. He bivouacked on the heights of Safarie at daybreak, and distributed bread, water and brandy to his men. He had been forced to take the longest road, because his artillery and wagons could not follow him along the banks of the Kishon. He took up his march again at nine o'clock in the morning, and at ten he reached the foot of Mount Tabor.

There, about nine miles away, on the vast plain of Esdrelon, he saw Kléber's division, scarcely twenty-five hundred strong, face to face with the entire body of the enemy's army, which enveloped it on all sides, and where it looked like a black patch surrounded by a wall of fire.

It was being attacked by more than twenty thousand cavalry, which twisted now like an avalanche, now like a whirlwind. Never had these men, who had seen so many things, been confronted with such a horde of cavalry, charging and galloping around them. And yet each soldier, standing foot to foot with his neighbor, preserved the terrible calmness which could alone insure his safety, re-

ceived the Turks at the end of his rifle, and fired only when he was sure of his man; stabbing the horses with his bayonet when they came too near, but reserving his bullets for their riders.

Each man had received fifty cartridges, but at eleven in the morning they were obliged to make a fresh distribution of fifty more. They had fired a hundred thousand bullets; they had made a breastwork of dead horses and men around themselves; and this horrible heap, this bleeding wall, sheltered them like a rampart.

This was what Bonaparte and his men saw when they rounded Mount Tabor. At this sight enthusiastic shouts rang down the line: "To the enemy! To the enemy!"

But Bonaparte shouted, "Halt!" He made them take a quarter of an hour's rest. He knew that Kléber could hold out for hours yet if necessary, and he wished the day's work to be well done. Then he formed his six thousand men into two squares of three thousand men each, and distributed them in such wise as to inclose the whole savage horde of cavalry and infantry in a triangle of steel and fire.

The combatants were in such deadly earnest that—like the Romans and Carthaginians, who, during the battle of Trasimene did not feel the earthquake which overthrew twenty-two cities—neither the Turks nor the French perceived the advance of the two armed bodies, in whose trains thunder was rolling, as yet mute, but with its glistening weapons flashing in the sunlight, forerunners of the storm which was about to burst.

Suddenly they heard a single cannon-shot. This was the signal agreed upon to warn Kléber of Bonaparte's approach. The three squares were now not more than three miles apart, and their combined fire was about to be directed upon a struggling mass of twenty-five thousand men. The fire burst forth from all three sides at once.

The Mamelukes and Janissaries, in short all the cavalry, turned this way and that, not knowing how to escape from the furnace, while the ten thousand infantry, ignorant of

all the art and science of war, broke their ranks and hurled themselves upon all three lines of fire.

All who were fortunate enough to run between the shots were fortunate enough to escape. At the end of an hour the fugitives had disappeared like dust swept by the wind, leaving the plain covered with dead, abandoning their camp, their standards, four hundred camels, and an immense amount of booty.

The fugitives thought themselves safe, and those who succeeded in reaching the mountains of Nablos did indeed find shelter there; but those who tried to escape across the Jordan by the way they had come, found Murat and his thousand men guarding the ford of the river.

The French did not stop until they were weary of killing. Bonaparte and Kléber met upon the battlefield and embraced amid the shouts of the three squares.

According to tradition, it was then that the colossal Kléber, putting his hand on Bonaparte's shoulder, who barely reached to his chest, said those words which have so often since been disputed: "General, you are as great as the world!"

Bonaparte ought to have been content.

He had just conquered on the same spot where Guy de Lusignan had been defeated; it was there that, on the 5th of July, 1187, the French, "after having exhausted even the source of their tears," says the Arab author, "met in desperate conflict with the Mussulmans commanded by Saladin."

"At the beginning," says the same author, "they fought like lions; but at the end they were nothing more than scattered sheep." Surrounded on all sides, they were driven back to the foot of the Mount of Beatitudes, where our Saviour in teaching the people had said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they that weep, blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake"; and where he also said: "When ye pray say, 'Our Father, who art in heaven,' "

The whole action took place in the neighborhood of this mountain, which the infidels call Mount Hittin.

Guy de Lusignan took refuge among the hills and defended the True Cross as well as he could; but he could not prevent the Mussulmans from capturing it after they had mortally wounded the Bishop of Saint-Jean-d'Acre who was carrying it.

Raymond opened a passage for his men and escaped to Tripoli, where he died of grief. So long as a single group of horsemen remained, they returned to the charge; but it melted before the Saracens like wax before a blazing furnace. Finally the king's standard fell to rise no more. Guy de Lusignan was made a prisoner, and Saladin, taking the sword of the King of Jerusalem from the hands of the man who brought it to him, dismounted from his horse, and, kneeling down, gave thanks to Mohammed for the victory.

Never did Christians in Palestine or elsewhere suffer such a defeat. "In looking over the number of the dead," says an eye-witness, "one could not credit the fact that any prisoners had been made; in looking upon the prisoners one could not believe that there were any dead."

The king, after having sworn to renounce his kingdom, was sent to Damascus. All the chevaliers of the Temple and the Hospitallers lost their heads. Saladin, fearing that his soldiers might feel the touch of that pity which left him unmoved, offered fifty gold pieces for the head of every one of these soldiers-monks which should be brought to him.

Scarcely a thousand men were left out of the whole Christian army. The Arab authors say that prisoners were sold for a pair of sandals, and that they exposed the heads of the Christians like melons in Damascus.

Monseigneur Mislin, in his beautiful book, "Les Saints Lieux," says that a year after this horrible carnage, in crossing the field of Hittin, he still found heaps of bones, and that the mountains and valleys adjoining were covered with remains which wild beasts had dragged thither.

After the battle of Mount Tabor the jackals of the plain of Esdrelon had no need to envy the hyenas of the mountain of Tiberias.

CHAPTER XI

THE BULLET MERCHANT

SINCE Bonaparte had returned from Mount Tabor, nearly a month before, not a day had passed that the batteries had ceased to thunder, or when there had been a truce between besieged and besiegers. This was the first resistance that Fortune had cast in Bonaparte's path. The siege of Saint-Jean-d'Acre lasted sixty days. There were seven assaults and twelve sorties. Caffarelli died from having his arm amputated, and Croisier was still confined to his couch of suffering. A thousand men had been killed or had died of the plague. And while there was still plenty of powder there were no bullets.

The report spread through the army; such things cannot be concealed from the soldiers. One morning a sergeant-major approached Roland, who was in the trench with Bonaparte, and said to him: "Is it true, my commandant, that the commander-in-chief is in need of bullets?"

"Yes," replied Roland. "Why?"

"Oh," replied the sergeant-major, with a movement of the neck which was peculiar to him, and apparently dated back to the days when he wore a cravat for the first time, and did not like the feeling, "if he wants some I can get them for him."

"You?"

"Yes, I. And not so dear either. Five sous."

"Five sous! And they cost the government forty!"

"You see, it would be a good bargain."

"You are not joking?"

"Do you think I would joke with my superiors?"

Roland went up to Bonaparte and told him what the sergeant-major had just said.

"These rogues often have good ideas," he said. "Call him."

Roland beckoned to the sergeant to come forward. He advanced with a military step, and stopped a couple of yards away from Bonaparte with his hand at the vizor of his shako.

"Are you the bullet merchant?" asked Bonaparte.

"I sell them, but I do not make them."

"And you can furnish them for five sous?"

"Yes, general."

"How do you do that?"

"Ah! that is my secret! If I were to tell it, everybody would be selling them."

"How many can you furnish me?"

"As many as you wish," replied the sergeant-major.

"What must I give you for that?"

"Permission to go in bathing with my company."

Bonaparte burst out laughing, for he understood at once.

"Very well," he said. "Go!"

The sergeant-major saluted and started off at a run. Shortly afterward the commander-in-chief and his aide saw the company to whom the former had given the permission to bathe pass with the sergeant-major at their head.

"Come and see something curious," said Bonaparte.

And taking Roland's arm, he ascended a little hill, from which the whole gulf was visible.

They saw the sergeant-major set the example by rushing into the water, as he certainly would have done had he been rushing into fire, after having first removed his clothing, and wade into the sea with a part of his men, while the others scattered along the shore. Roland had not understood until then.

But scarcely had the sergeant-major executed this manœuvre than the English frigates and the ramparts of Saint-Jean-d'Acre opened fire, and a storm of bullets fell around them. As the soldiers, both those who were in the water

and those who had remained on shore, took good care to stay at a safe distance from each other, the bullets fell into the spaces between them, and were immediately picked up without a single one being lost, not even those which fell into the water. The beach sloped gradually, and the soldiers had only to stoop and pick them up.

This strange game lasted two hours. At the end of that time the inventor of the system had collected from a thousand to twelve hundred bullets, which netted three hundred francs to the company, a hundred francs for each man lost. The company thought it a very good bargain. As the batteries of the frigates and the city were of the same calibre (16 and 12) as those used by the French army, not a bullet was lost.

The next day the company went in bathing again, and when the commander-in-chief heard the cannonading he could not resist the temptation of witnessing the strange spectacle once more, and this time some of the principal officers of the army accompanied him. Roland could not contain himself. He was one of those men who go mad over the sound of cannon and who are intoxicated by the smell of powder. He dashed down to the shore in two bounds, and tossing all of his clothes except his drawers upon the shore, he sprang into the sea. Twice Bonaparte called him back, but he did not seem to hear.

"What ails the foolish fellow," he murmured, "that he will never let slip an opportunity to be killed?"

Roland was no longer there to reply, and he would probably not have replied had he been there. Bonaparte followed him with his eyes. He soon passed the cordon of bathers, and swam out until he was almost within musket range of the "Tiger." They opened fire upon him, and the balls sent the water seething around him.

This did not disturb him, and his conduct so closely resembled bravado that an officer on the "Tiger" ordered a boat lowered. Roland longed to be killed, but he did not wish to be taken prisoner. He swam vigorously for the

reefs which lie along the base of Saint-Jean-d'Acre. It was impossible for the boat to pursue him among those reefs.

Roland disappeared for a moment, and Bonaparte was beginning to fear that some accident had befallen him, when he reappeared at the foot of the city, within the range of fire of the musketry. The Turks, seeing a Christian within rifle-shot, did not hesitate to fire upon him; but Roland seemed to be in league with the bullets. He walked slowly back along the edge of the water. The sand on one side and the water on the other were thrown up almost at his very feet. He reached the spot where he had removed his clothes, dressed himself, and returned to Bonaparte's side.

A *vivandière* who was with the party at the time, distributing the contents of her cask to the bullet gatherers, offered him a glass.

"Ah! is it you, Goddess of Reason?" said Roland. "You know very well that I never drink brandy."

"No," said she; "but once does not make a habit, and what you have just done deserves a drop, citizen-commandant." And she held out a little silver cup full of liquor.

"To the health of the commander-in-chief and of Saint-Jean-d'Acre," said she.

Roland raised his glass toward Bonaparte and drank. Then he offered her a piece of money.

"Pooh!" said she, "I sell my liquor to those who need to buy courage, but not to you. Besides, my husband will make a good thing out of this."

"What is your husband doing?"

"He is the bullet merchant."

"Well, to judge by the cannonading, he is liable to make a fortune in a short time. Where is this husband of yours?"

"There he is," she said, pointing out to Roland the sergeant-major who had suggested that he be allowed to sell bullets to Bonaparte. As the Goddess of Reason was pointing, a shell buried itself in the sand not four feet from the speculator.

The sergeant-major, who seemed to be familiar with all

sorts of projectiles, threw himself face downward in the sand and waited. The shell burst in about three minutes, scattering a cloud of sand.

"Upon my word, Goddess of Reason," said Roland, "I am afraid that shell has made you a widow."

But the sergeant-major rose unhurt from the midst of the dust and sand. He seemed to be rising from the crater of a volcano. "Long live the Republic!" he shouted as he shook himself.

And on the instant, from the shore and the water, that sacred phrase, which made the dead immortal, was taken up by spectators and actors.

CHAPTER XII

HOW CITIZEN PIERRE-CLAUDE FARAUD WAS MADE A SUB-LIEUTENANT

THIS collecting of musket balls lasted four days; but the English and Turks finally guessed the meaning of this performance which they had at first taken to be bravado.

A count of the balls showed that they had picked up thirty-four hundred. Bonaparte paid for them to the last sou through Estève, the paymaster of the army.

"Ah!" said Estève, when he recognized the sergeant-major, "so you are speculating in artillery again! I paid you for a cannon at Froeschwiller, and now I am to pay you for thirty-four hundred cannon-balls at Saint-Jean-d'Acre."

"Pooh!" said the sergeant-major, "I am none the richer for it; the six hundred francs at Froeschwiller, together with the Prince de Condé's treasure, went to the fund of the widows and orphans of Dawendorff."

"And what are you going to do with this money?"

"Oh! I have a use for it."

"Might I ask what it is?"

"Certainly, since I depend on you to undertake the commission, citizen-paymaster. This money is destined for our brave Captain Guillet's old mother. He was killed at the last assault. He bequeathed her to his company before he died. The Republic is not very rich and might forget to pay the pensions of its widows. Well, in default of a pension the company will send her a little capital. It is a great pity, though, that those fools of Turks and those devils of Englishmen should have guessed our game and refused to keep it up any longer; we would have made up a sum of a thousand francs for the poor woman. But what will you, citizen-paymaster! The prettiest girl in the world can give no more than she has; and the thirty-second brigade, although it is the prettiest girl in the army, has only one hundred and seventy francs to offer."

"Where does Captain Guillet's mother live?"

"At Chateauroux, the capital of the Indre. Ah! it is fine to be faithful to one's old regiment, and that is just what he was, that brave Captain Guillet."

"Very well, the sum shall be paid to her, in the name of the third company of the thirty-second brigade, and of—"

"Pierre-Claude Faraud, the executor of his will."

"Thanks. And now, Pierre-Claude Faraud, the commander-in-chief wishes me to say to you that he wants to speak with you."

"Whenever he likes," replied the sergeant-major, with that twist of the neck which was peculiar to him. "Pierre-Claude Faraud is never too much embarrassed to talk."

"He will send for you."

"I await the summons." And the sergeant-major turned upon his heel and returned to the barracks of the thirty-second brigade, to wait until he was sent for.

Bonaparte was eating dinner in his tent when he was informed that the sergeant-major whom he had sent for was awaiting his pleasure.

"Let him come in," said Bonaparte.

The sergeant-major entered.

"Ah! it is you," said Bonaparte.

"Yes, citizen-general, did you not send for me?" replied Faraud.

"What brigade do you belong to?"

"The thirty-second."

"To what company?'

"The third."

"Captain?"

"Captain Guillet, deceased."

"Not replaced?"

"Not replaced."

"Which of the two lieutenants is the braver."

"There is no 'braver' in the thirty-second. They are all equally brave."

"The older, then?"

"Lieutenant Valats, who stayed at his post with a shot through his breast."

"The second lieutenant was not wounded?"

"That was not his fault."

"Very well. Valats then will be captain, and the second lieutenant will succeed him. Now, is there not an under-officer who has distinguished himself?"

"All the men distinguished themselves."

"But I cannot make them all lieutenants, stupid."

"That is a fact. Well, then there is Taberly."

"Who is Taberly?"

"A brave man."

"And would his appointment be well received?"

"With applause."

"Then there will be a vacant sub-lieutenancy. Who is the oldest sergeant-major?"

The man whom he was questioning made a movement with his neck as if his cravat were strangling him. "He is one Pierre-Claude Faraud," he replied.

"What have you to say about him?"

"Nothing much."

"Perhaps you do not know him?"

"It is exactly because I do know him."

"Well, I know him also."

"You know him, general?"

"Yes; he is an aristocrat of the Army of the Rhine—"

"Oh!"

"A quarrelsome fellow—"

"General!"

"Whom I caught fighting a duel with a brave Republican at Milan."

"He was one of his friends, general. Friends may fight."

"And whom I sent to the guard-house for forty-eight hours."

"Twenty-four, general."

"Then I cheated him out of the other twenty-four."

"He is ready to take them, general."

"A sub-lieutenant is not sent to the guard-house; he is put under arrest."

"General, Pierre-Claude Faraud is not a sub-lieutenant, he is only a sergeant-major."

"Oh, yes; he is a sub-lieutenant."

"That's a good one, for example! Since when?"

"Since this morning. See what it is to have patrons."

"I? Patrons?"

"Oho! So it is you?"

"Yes, it is I. And I should like to know who my patrons are."

"I," replied Estève, "who have twice seen you generously give away money which you have earned."

"And I," said Roland, "because I want a brave man to second me on an expedition from which few will return."

"Take him," said Bonaparte; "but I advise you not to give him sentry duty if there are any wolves in the country."

"What, general, do you know that story?"

"I know everything, monsieur."

"General," said Faraud, "you are the one to do my twenty-four hours in the guard-house."

"Why?"

"Because you have just said monsieur."

"Come, come," said Bonaparte, laughing, "you are a bright fellow; I shall remember you. In the meantime you must drink a glass of wine to the health of the Republic."

"General," said Roland, "citizen Faraud never drinks to the health of the Republic in anything but brandy."

"The deuce! And I have none," said Bonaparte.

"I have provided for the emergency," replied Roland; and going to the flap of the tent he said, "Come in, citizeness Reason."

Citizeness Reason obeyed. She was still beautiful, although the sun of Egypt had darkened her complexion.

"Rose here!" exclaimed Faraud.

"Do you know the citizeness?" asked Roland, laughing.

"I should think so; she is my wife!" replied Faraud.

"Citizeness," said Bonaparte, "I saw you at work in the midst of the musket balls. Roland wanted to pay you for the brandy you gave him when he came out of the water, but you refused. As I had no brandy here, and my guests each desire a glass, Roland said: 'Let us call the Goddess of Reason, and we can pay her for it all at the same time.' So we called you. Now serve us."

Citizeness Reason tipped her little cask and poured out a glassful for each. She forgot Faraud.

"When the health of the Republic is drunk," observed Roland, "everybody drinks."

"But any one who chooses is at liberty to drink water," cried Bonaparte; and raising his glass, he cried, gayly, "To the health of the Republic."

The toast was repeated in chorus. Then Roland, drawing a parchment from his pocket, said: "Here is your bill of exchange on posterity, but it is in your husband's name. You may indorse it, but he alone can use it."

The Goddess of Reason unfolded the parchment with trembling hands, while Faraud looked on with sparkling eyes.

"Here, Pierre," she cried, "read it! It is your commission as sub-lieutenant in Taberly's place."

"Is that true?" asked Faraud.

"Look for yourself."

Faraud looked.

"Hurrah! Sub-lieutenant Faraud!" he shouted. "Long live General Bonaparte!"

"Twenty-four hours' arrest for having cried 'Long live General Bonaparte!' instead of 'Long live the Republic!'" said Bonaparte.

"I certainly cannot escape them," said Faraud; "but I will do those twenty-four hours with pleasure."

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAST ASSAULT

DURING the night following Faraud's promotion to a sub-lieutenancy, Bonaparte received eight heavy pieces of artillery and an abundance of ammunition. Faraud's thirty-four hundred balls had served to repulse the sorties from the town. The "Accursed Tower" was almost completely demolished, and Bonaparte resolved to make a last effort.

Then, too, the circumstances rendered this imperative.

A Turkish fleet of thirty vessels, escorted by English warships, was sighted on the 8th of May. It was scarcely daylight when Bonaparte learned of this. He climbed the little hill whence he could survey the entire harbor. It was his opinion that the fleet came from the Island of Rhodes, and was conveying ammunition, troops and provisions to the besieged.

It became imperative therefore to take Saint-Jean-d'Acre before the town received these reinforcements.

When Roland saw that he had decided upon the attack, he asked the general for two hundred men with full permission to use them in any way and for whatever purpose he should choose.

Bonaparte asked for an explanation. He had great con-

fidence in Roland's bravery, which amounted almost to rashness; but because of this very rashness he feared to intrust the lives of two hundred men to him. Then Roland explained that the day when he took his long swim he had seen a breach in the walls from the sea which could not be seen from land, and which had evidently caused the besieged no anxiety, defended as it was by an inside battery and the fire from the English frigates. He intended to enter the town through this breach and then create a diversion with his two hundred men.

Bonaparte gave him the desired permission. Roland chose two hundred men from the thirty-second brigade, and among them Sub-lieutenant Faraud.

Bonaparte ordered a general attack. Murat, Rampon, Vial, Kléber, Junot, generals of division, generals of brigade, chiefs of corps, all were to charge at once.

At ten o'clock in the morning all the outer works which had been recaptured by the enemy were thrown down once more. Five flags were taken, three cannon carried off, and four more spiked. But the besieged did not yield an inch; as fast as they were beaten down, others took their places. Never had such audacity and ardor, never had more impetuous courage and obstinate valor, struggled for the possession of a city.

Generals, officers and soldiers fought together in confusion in the trench. Kléber, armed with an Albanian rifle which he had wrested from its owner, made a club of it, and raising it above his head as a thresher uses his flail, he brought down a man with every blow. Murat, with his head uncovered and his long hair floating in the wind, was flashing his sabre back and forth, its fine temper bringing its message of death to all those who came in contact with it. Junot killed a man, now with a pistol, now with a rifle, every time he fired.

Boyer, the commander of the eighteenth brigade, fell in the disorder with seventeen officers and more than a hundred and fifty soldiers of his corps; but Lannes, Bon, and

Vial passed over their bodies, which only served to raise them closer to the ramparts.

Bonaparte, not in the trench, but upon it, was directing the artillery himself, and motionless, a target for all, was making a breach in the wall on his right with the cannon in the tower. They had made a practicable opening at the end of an hour. They had no bushes with which to fill up the ditch; but they threw in the corpses as they had already done at another part of the ramparts. Mussulmans and Christians, French and Turks, thrown out through the windows of the tower where they laid heaped up, raised a bridge as high as the ramparts.

Shouts of "Long live the Republic!" were heard, with cries of "To the assault!" The band played the "Marseillaise," and the rest of the army joined in the fight.

Bonaparte sent one of his ordnance officers named Raimbaud, to tell Roland that the time had come for him to effect his diversion; but when he learned what had been projected, instead of returning to Bonaparte, Raimbaud asked permission to remain with Roland. The two young men were friends, and when a battle is on one does not refuse favors of that sort to a friend.

Roland no sooner heard the order than he placed himself at the head of his two hundred men, plunged into the water with them, turned the corner of the bastion with the water up to their waists, and presented himself in the breach with the trumpets in front. The attack was so unexpected, although the siege had lasted two months, that the gunners were not even at their posts. Roland took possession of them, and having no men to work them, he spiked them. Then shouting, "Victory! Victory!" they dashed into the winding streets of the town.

These cries were heard on the ramparts and redoubled the ardor of the besiegers. For the second time Bonaparte believed himself master of Saint-Jean-d'Acre, and sprang into the "Accursed Tower," which they had had such difficulty in taking. But when he reached it he saw with dis

may that the French troops had been brought to a halt by a second inclosure. This was the one which Colonel Phélippeaux—Bonaparte's companion at Brienne—had constructed behind the other.

Leaning half-way out of the window, Bonaparte shouted encouragement to his soldiers. The grenadiers, furious at meeting with this fresh obstacle, attempted to mount on each other's shoulders for want of ladders; but suddenly, while the assailants were being attacked in front by those who had been placed there to defend the inclosure, they were swept by a battery in the flank. A tremendous fusillade burst forth on all sides—from the houses, the streets, the barricades, and even from Djezzar's seraglio. A thick smoke poured up from the city. It was Roland, Raimbaud and Faraud who had fired the bazar. In the midst of the smoke they appeared on the roofs of the houses, and endeavored to enter into communication with those on the ramparts. Through the smoke of the fire and of the artillery they saw the tri-colored plumes waving, and from the city and the ramparts they could hear the cry of "Victory!" which went up for the third time that day. It was destined to be the last.

The soldiers who were to effect a junction with Roland's two hundred men, a portion of whom had already slid down into the town, while the others were fighting on the ramparts or in the ditches, being assailed by volleys from four sides, hesitated as the bullets whistled and the cannon roared around them, falling like hail and passing like a hurricane. Lannes, wounded in the head by a musket ball, fell upon his knees, and was carried off by his soldiers. Kléber held his own like an invulnerable giant in the midst of the fire. Bon and Vial were driven back into the ditch. Bonaparte sought for some one to support Kléber, but every one was occupied. He then ordered the retreat with tears of rage in his eyes; for he did not doubt that all who had entered the town with Roland, together with those who had slipped over the ramparts to join him, some two hundred and fifty

or three hundred in all, were lost. And what a harvest of heads they would have to gather in the moat the next day.

He was the last one to retreat, and he shut himself up in his tent with orders that no one was to disturb him. This was the first time in the course of three years that he had doubted his own fortune.

What a sublime page could be written by the historian who could tell what thoughts passed through his mind in that hour of despair.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST BULLETIN

MEANWHILE Roland and his men, and those who had gone into the town to join him, having cherished for a time the hope that they were to be supported, were at last forced to the conviction that they had been abandoned. The shouts of victory which had answered their own became fainter and fainter, and then died away. Then the volleys of musketry and cannon gradually grew fainter, until they had ceased entirely in the course of an hour. Amid the other sounds which encompassed him, Roland even thought that he heard the sound of the drums and trumpets sounding and beating the retreat.

Then, as we have said, all these sounds ceased.

Then, like a tide rising upon all sides at once, from all points of the compass, the little troop was assailed by English, Turks, Mamelukes, Arnauts, Albanians—the entire garrison, in short, of some eight thousand men.

Roland formed his little troop into a square, one side of which he backed against a mosque, thus converting it into a fortress, and there, after making them swear to defend themselves to the death against these enemies from whom they knew they could expect no quarter, they waited with levelled bayonets.

The Turks, full of overweening confidence in their cavalry as usual, dashed upon the little troop with such vio-

lence that, although the double volley of the French laid low over sixty men and horses, those who came up behind rode over their bodies and dashed upon the bayonets of the still smoking guns.

But there they were forced to stop. The second rank had time to reload and fire at close quarters. They had no choice but to fall back, and as they could not again cross the heap of corpses, they sought to flee to the right and left. Two terrible volleys accompanied their flight and cut them down in swaths. But they returned with all the greater desperation.

Then a frightful struggle ensued, a regular hand-to-hand encounter, in which the Turkish horsemen, defying the murderous volleys, rushed up to the very points of the French bayonets, to discharge their pistols at their adversaries.

Others again, seeing that the reflection of the sun upon the gun-barrels frightened their horses, made them walk backward, and, forcing them to rear, threw them over on the bayonets. The wounded dragged themselves along the ground, and, gliding like serpents under the gun-barrels, hamstrung the French.

Roland, perceiving that the number of his men was decreasing, and that, despite the triple row of corpses which formed a rampart for the little troop, he could not hope to sustain the unequal fight much longer, had the door of the mosque opened, and with the utmost composure, continuing his murderous fire all the while, he bade his men enter, being the last to pass through the door himself. Then the firing began again through every opening in the mosque; but the Turks brought up pieces of artillery and trained them against the door. Roland himself was near a window, and one after another, the three gunners who drew near to apply the match to the touch-hole fell. Then a horsemen rode swiftly toward the gun, and, before any one could divine his motive, he fired his pistol at the priming. The gun was discharged, and the door broken in.

This broken entrance emitted such a terrible fusillade, however, that the Turks presented themselves before it

three times to enter the mosque and were repulsed each time. Mad with rage, they rallied, and made a fourth attempt, but this time only a few scattered shots replied to their shouts of death. The little troop had exhausted its ammunition. The grenadiers awaited the enemy with fixed bayonets.

"Friends," cried Roland, "remember that you have sworn to die rather than be made prisoners by Djezzar the Butcher, who cut off your comrades' heads."

"We swear it!" replied Roland's two hundred men with one voice.

"Long live the Republic!" said Roland.

"Long live the Republic!" they all repeated after him.

And each man prepared to die, but to sell his life dearly. Just then a group of officers appeared at the doorway with Sidney Smith at their head. They all carried their swords in their scabbards. Smith raised his hat and made a sign that he wished to speak. Silence ensued.

"Gentlemen," he said in excellent French, "you are brave men, and it shall never be said that men who had borne themselves like heroes were massacred in my presence. Give yourselves up; I will guarantee that your lives shall be spared."

"It is too much or not enough," replied Roland.

"Pray what do you want?"

"Kill us to the last man, or let us all go."

"You are exacting, gentlemen," said the commodore; "but one can refuse nothing to such men as you. But you will permit me to furnish you with an escort of Englishmen as far as the gate? Otherwise none of you will reach it alive. Is that agreed?"

"Yes, my lord," replied Roland; "and we can only thank you for your courtesy."

Sidney Smith left two English officers to guard the door, entered the mosque himself, and held out his hand to Roland. Ten minutes later the English escort arrived.

The French soldiers with fixed bayonets, and the English

officers with drawn swords, traversed the street which led to the French camp, amid the imprecations of the Mussulmans, the howling of the women, and the cries of the children. The ten or twelve wounded, among them Faraud, were carried on improvised litters of gun-barrels. The Goddess of Reason walked beside the sub-lieutenant's litter, pistol in hand. Smith and his English soldiers accompanied the grenadiers until they were out of range of the Turkish guns, and as they defiled before the redcoats the latter presented arms.

Bonaparte, as we have said, had retired within his tent. He called for Plutarch, and read the biography of Augustus; then, thinking of Roland and his gallant companions, who were probably being murdered, he muttered, like Augustus after the battle of Teutberg: "Varus, give me back my legions!"

But he had no one of whom he could demand his legions, for he had been his own Varus.

Suddenly he heard a great uproar and the strains of the "Marseillaise" reached his ears. Why did these soldiers rejoice and sing when their general was weeping with rage?

He sprang to the door of his tent. The first persons he saw were Roland, his aide-de-camp Raimbaud, and Faraud.

The wounded man was leaning on the shoulder of the Goddess of Reason. Behind them came the two hundred men whom Bonaparte had thought lost.

"Ah, my good friend," he said, pressing Roland's hand, "I was mourning for you. I thought you were lost. How the devil did you get out of it?"

"Raimbaud will tell you," said Roland, who was in a bad humor because he owed his life to an Englishman; "I am too thirsty to talk, I want something to drink."

And taking a glass full of water, which was standing upon the table, he emptied it at a single draught, while Bonaparte went out to meet the soldiers, all the more delighted to see them since he had never expected to do so again.

CHAPTER XV

VANISHED DREAMS

NAPOLEON, speaking of Saint-Jean-d'Acre at Saint Helena, said: "That paltry town held the destiny of the East. If Saint-Jean-d'Acre had fallen, I would have changed the face of the world."

This regret, expressed some twenty years later, gives an idea of the poignancy of what Bonaparte must have suffered at the time, when he realized the impossibility of taking Saint-Jean-d'Acre, and published the following order in all the divisions of the army.

As usual, Bourrienne wrote at his dictation:

Soldiers! You have crossed the desert which separates Africa from Asia with more rapidity than an army of Arabs.

The army, which was on its way to invade Egypt, is destroyed. You have taken its general, its camp baggage, its supplies and its camels.

You have captured all the strongholds which defend the wells of the desert. On the fields of Mount Tabor you have dispersed the cloud of men which had gathered from all parts of Asia in the hope of pillaging Egypt.

Finally, after having maintained the war with a handful of men in the heart of Syria for more than three months, taken forty pieces of artillery, fifty flags, six thousand prisoners, levelled the fortifications of Gaza, Jaffa, Kaïffa, and Acre, we are about to return to Egypt; the season of disembarkation calls me back.

A few days more and we might hope to take the pasha in his own palace; but at this season the price of the castle of Acre is not worth the loss of a few days, and the brave men whom I should lose are now necessary to me for other operations.

Soldiers, we have a season of fatigue and danger before us. Having made it impossible for the East to do anything against us during the forthcoming campaign, we shall perhaps be forced to repulse the attack of a part of the West.

You will find new opportunities for glory; and if in so many battles, every day is marked with the loss of a brave

man, other brave men must be made every day, and take their places among the little band who set the example of daring in times of danger, and who make victory easy.

As he finished dictating this bulletin to Bourrienne, Bonaparte rose and went out of his tent as if to breathe more freely. Bourrienne followed him uneasily; events seldom left such a deep impression upon that heart of bronze.

Bonaparte climbed the little hill which overlooked the camp, seated himself upon a stone, and remained for a long time staring at the partially demolished fortress and the ocean which lay before him in its immensity. Finally he said: "The men who will write my life will not understand why I was so anxious to take this wretched little place. Ah, if I had taken it as I hoped!"

He let his head fall upon his hands.

"And if you had taken it?" asked Bourrienne.

"If I had taken it," replied Bonaparte, seizing his hand, "I should have found the treasures of the pasha in the city and arms for three hundred thousand men; I would have aroused and armed all Syria; I would have marched upon Damascus and Aleppo; I would have swelled my army with all the malcontents; I would have announced the abolition of servitude and the tyrannical rule of the pashas to the people; I would have reached Constantinople with my armed hordes; I would have overthrown the Turkish Empire; I would have founded a new and vast empire in the Orient which would have fixed my place in history; and perhaps I should have returned to Paris by way of Adrianople and Vienna, after having humbled the house of Austria."

This, as will be seen, was nothing more nor less than Cæsar's project when he fell beneath the assassin's knife; it was his war among the Parthians which was to end only in Germany. As far as was the man of the 13th Vendémiaire from the conqueror of Italy, so far was the conqueror of Italy that day from the conqueror of Egypt.

Proclaimed throughout Europe the greatest of living generals, he sought, on the shores where Alexander, Hanni-

bal and Cæsar had fought, to equal if not surpass the names of these captains of antiquity; and he did surpass them, since he tried to do what they only dreamed of.

"What would have become of Europe," said Pascal, speaking of Cromwell's death from calculus, "if that grain of sand had not entered his entrails?"

What would have become of Bonaparte's fortunes if Saint-Jean-d'Acre had not stood in the way?

He was dreaming of this great mystery of the unknown when his eye was attracted by a black speck between the mountains of the Carmel chain which was gradually growing larger. As it drew nearer he recognized a soldier of that dromedary corps which he had created "to pursue the fugitives more swiftly after the battle."

Bonaparte drew his glass from his pocket, and, after taking a good look, he said: "Good! Now we shall have some news from Egypt."

And he stood up. The messenger also recognized him; he promptly turned his dromedary, which was edging toward the camp, somewhat out of the direct line toward the hill. Bonaparte descended the hill. The soldier, who seemed to be an excellent rider, put his dromedary to a gallop. He wore the uniform of a quartermaster-general.

"Where do you come from?" called Bonaparte as soon as the man could hear him.

"From Upper Egypt," was the answer.

"What news?"——"Bad, general."

Bonaparte stamped his foot. "Come here," he said.

The man reached Bonaparte in a few moments. The dromedary knelt down and the man slid to the ground.

"Here, citizen-general," he said, and he handed him a despatch. Bonaparte passed it to Bourrienne, saying: "Read it." Bourrienne read:

To the Commander-in-Chief, Bonaparte:

I do not know whether this despatch will reach you, general, or whether, if it does, you will be in a position to remedy the disaster with which I am threatened.

While General Desaix was pursuing the Mamelukes from the coast of Syout, the flotilla composed of the "Italie," and several other armed ships, which carried almost all of the supplies of the division, some artillery, and the sick and wounded, was detained off the coast of Beyrout by the wind.

The flotilla was attacked within a quarter of an hour by the Sherif Hassan and three or four thousand men. We are not in any condition to resist but we shall do so.

But we cannot escape death save by a miracle.

I am preparing this despatch, to which I shall add the details of the battle as it progresses.

Hassan attacks us with a sharp fusillade; I have ordered his fire to be returned. It is two o'clock in the afternoon.

Three o'clock—The Arabs are returning to the charge for the third time, after suffering terrible havoc from our artillery. I have lost a third of my men.

Four o'clock—The Arabs have thrown themselves into the river and taken the small boats. I have only a dozen men, all the rest are dead or wounded. I shall wait until the Arabs have crowded aboard the "Italie," and then I shall blow her up with myself and them.

I am sending this despatch by a brave and clever man, who has promised me that, unless he is killed, he will find you wherever you are. In ten minutes all will be over.

CAPTAIN MORANDI.

"And then?" asked Bonaparte.

"That is all."

"But Captain Morandi?"

"Blew himself up, general," replied the messenger.

"And you?"

"Oh, I did not wait until he blew himself up; I blew away before that, after carefully concealing my despatch in my tobacco-box. Then I swam under water to a place where I hid in the tall grass. When it was dark I came out from under the water, and crawled on all fours to the camp where I came upon a sleeping Arab. I put a dagger into him, and taking his dromedary I started off at a gallop."

"And you have come from Beyrout?"

"Yes, citizen-general."

"Without accident?"

"If you call shots fired at or by me accidents, then I have

had plenty and my camel also. Between us we have been hit four times. He three times in the side, and I once in the shoulder. We have been hungry and thirsty; he has eaten nothing at all, and I have eaten horseflesh. But here we are. You are well, citizen-general; that is all that is necessary."

"But Morandi?" asked Bonaparte.

"The deuce! as he put the match to the powder himself, I rather think that it would be difficult to find any of him, even a piece as big as a nut."

"And the 'Italie'?"

"There is not enough of the 'Italie' left to make matches."

"You were right, my friend; this is indeed bad news. Bourrienne, you will say that I am superstitious; but did you notice the name of the vessel?"

"The 'Italie.'"

"Well, now listen, Bourrienne. Italy is lost to France; that is beyond doubt; my presentiments never deceive me."

Bourrienne shrugged his shoulders. "What connection do you find between a ship which is blown up twenty-four hundred miles from France, on the Nile, and Italy?"

"I have said it," replied Bonaparte with a prophetic accent, "and you will see." Then, after a moment's silence, he said, pointing to the messenger: "Take this good fellow with you, Bourrienne; give him thirty talaris, and get him to tell you the story of the battle of Beyrout."

CHAPTER XVI

THE RETREAT

IN THE evening, in order to conceal its movements from the enemy as well as to avoid the heat of the day, the army began its retreat. The orders were to follow the Mediterranean for the fresh air of the sea.

Bonaparte called Bourrienne and dictated an order to the effect that all who were able must go on foot, leaving the horses, mules and camels for the sick and wounded.

An anecdote will at times convey the state of a man's mind better than any number of descriptions.

Bonaparte had just finished his dictation when his personal attendant, Vigogne senior, entered the tent, and asked: "General, which horse have you reserved for yourself?"

Bonaparte looked him through and through, and then, striking him in the face with his riding-whip, he retorted: "Did you not hear the order, imbecile? Everybody is to go on foot, myself as well as the others. Go!" And he went.

There were three men sick of the plague at Mount Carmel; they, too ill to be moved, were left to the generosity of the Turks and the care of the Carmelite brothers.

Unfortunately, Sidney Smith was not there to save them and the Turks put them to death. Word of this was brought to Bonaparte after he had gone six miles. Then Bonaparte gave full vent to the passion of which the blow which he struck Vigogne was only the prelude. He stopped the artillery wagons and distributed torches to all the army. Then he gave orders to light the torches and to set fire to all the small towns and villages, hamlets and houses on the road. The barley was ripe; they set fire to it. It was a terrible yet a magnificent sight. The whole coast was in flames for thirty miles around, and the sea reflected the tremendous ocean of flames like a gigantic mirror. The bridge, being bare sand, was the only thing which was not on fire, and seemed like a bridge thrown over the Cocytus.

Bonaparte became alarmed when, after breakfast, he again took the head of the column. A devouring thirst, the total want of water, excessive heat, and a fatiguing march through burning sand-dunes had completely demoralized the men, and caused the most cruel selfishness and the most heartrending indifference to supersede all generous sentiments.

And this continued day after day. They began by ridding themselves of those who were sick of the plague under pretext that it was dangerous to take them along. Then came the turn of the wounded. The unfortunate men cried

out: "We have not got the plague, we are only wounded." And they showed their old wounds, or inflicted new ones on themselves. But the soldiers did not even turn their heads. "Your turn has come," they said. And they went on.

Bonaparte shuddered with terror when he saw this. He ordered a halt. He forced all the able-bodied men who were on mules, horses, or dromedaries to give them up to the sick and wounded.

They reached Tentoura on the 20th of May, in a stifling heat. They sought vainly for a bit of grass or a tree to give them shelter from the blazing sky. They lay down upon the sand, but it was fiery hot. Men were continually falling to rise no more. A wounded man in a litter asked for water. Bonaparte went up to him.

"Who have you got there?" asked he.

"We do not know," replied the men. "All that we do know is that he wears double epaulets."

The moans and the prayer for water had ceased.

"Who are you?" asked Bonaparte.

The wounded man was silent. Bonaparte raised the cloth which shaded the litter and recognized Croisier.

"Ah, my poor boy!" he exclaimed.

Croisier began to sob bitterly.

"Come," said Bonaparte, "have a little courage."

"Ah," said Croisier, lifting himself up in his litter, "you think I am weeping because I am going to die? I am weeping because you called me a coward; and I tried to get myself killed just because you did call me that."

"But," said Bonaparte, "I sent you a sword after that. Didn't Roland give it to you?"

"Here it is," replied Croisier, seizing the weapon which was at his side, and carrying it to his lips. "Those who are carrying me know that I want to have it buried with me. Tell them to do that, general."

And the wounded man clasped his hands imploringly.

Bonaparte dropped the corner of the cloth which covered the litter, gave the necessary order, and walked away.

When they left Tentoura on the following day they came upon a quicksand of considerable extent. There was no other road, so the artillery was obliged to take it, and the guns sank deep in the sand. They laid all the sick and wounded on the edge for a time, while they harnessed all the horses to the gun-carriages and wagons. But it was useless; wagons and cannon sunk to their middle in the sand. The able-bodied soldiers asked to be allowed to make a last effort. They exhausted themselves uselessly.

They wept as they abandoned the brass which they had so often blessed, which had so often witnessed their triumphs, and which had made Europe tremble.

They slept at Cesarea on the 22d of May.

So many of the sick and wounded had died that horses were more plentiful. Bonaparte, who was himself far from well, had nearly died from fatigue on the previous day. He was so strongly urged to do so that he finally consented to mount a horse. He had hardly gone three hundred paces beyond Cesarea when, about daybreak, a man fired point-blank at him from behind some bushes, but missed him.

The soldiers who were near the commander-in-chief darted into the thicket and dragged out the man, a native of Nablos, who was condemned to be shot on the spot. Four men pushed him toward the sea with the butts of their carbines; there they pulled their triggers, but none of the guns went off. The night had been damp and the powder was wet.

The Syrian, astonished at finding himself still alive, recovered his presence of mind immediately, and throwing himself into the sea, swam to a reef beyond the range of their muskets. The soldiers in their first stupefaction watched him go without thinking to fire off their muskets.

But Bonaparte, who knew what a bad effect it would have upon the superstitious population if such an attempt were to go unpunished, ordered a platoon to fire upon him. They obeyed, but the man was out of range, and the balls fell hissing into the water wide of the reef. The man drew

a dagger from his breast and made a threatening gesture with it. Bonaparte ordered them to load again with a charge and a half, and fire once more.

"It is useless," said Roland; "I will go." And he instantly threw off all his clothing, retaining only his drawers.

"Stay here, Roland," said Bonaparte; "I do not wish you to risk your life for that of an assassin."

But whether he did not hear him, or whether he did not wish to hear, Roland had already borrowed a dagger from the Sheik of Aher, who was retreating with the army, and, thrusting it between his teeth, he had thrown himself into the sea. The soldiers, who knew that the young captain was the most daring in the whole army, shouted "Bravo!" Bonaparte was forced to be a witness of the duel which was impending.

The Syrian did not attempt further flight when he saw that it was only one man who was coming after him, but waited. He presented a fine spectacle there on his rock. With one hand clinched and his dagger in the other he looked like a statue of Spartacus on a pedestal. Roland swam toward him, his course as straight as that of an arrow. The Syrian made no attempt to attack him until he had gained a footing; he even drew back courteously as far as the rock would afford him a footing. Roland emerged from the water, young and handsome, and dripping like a sea-god.

They stood facing each other. The rock which was to serve as their arena resembled the shell of an immense tortoise protruding from the water. The spectators looked for a long scientific contest in which neither would give any advantage to the other. But this was not to be.

Roland had no sooner gained his feet and shaken off the water which blinded him as it fell from his dripping hair, than, without taking any precaution to defend himself against his adversary's dagger, he sprang upon him, not as one man springs upon another, but as a jaguar springs upon the hunter. They saw the flash of the daggers, then the two men fell into the water.

There was a tremendous splashing, then one head reappeared—the blond head of Roland.

He clung to the sharp edges of the rock with one hand, then he rested his knee upon it, and finally stood upright, holding his adversary's head by its mass of long hair in the other hand. He resembled Perseus after he had cut off the Gorgon's head.

A tremendous shout went up among the spectators and reached Roland. Then putting his dagger between his teeth, he sprang into the sea and swam to the shore.

The army had halted. The men had forgotten both heat and thirst. The wounded forgot to think of their wounds. Even the dying found strength to rise on their elbows.

Roland paused ten feet from Bonaparte.

"Here," said he, "is the head of your would-be assassin."

Bonaparte recoiled, in spite of himself. As for Roland, he went straight to his clothes and began to put them on as calmly as if he had come from an ordinary bath, and with a degree of modesty which a woman might have envied him.

CHAPTER XVII

WHEREIN WE SEE THAT BONAPARTE'S PRESENTIMENTS DID NOT DECEIVE HIM

THE French arrived at Jaffa on the 24th. They stayed there the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th. Jaffa was indeed a city of misfortune for Bonaparte.

The reader will remember the four thousand prisoners whom Croisier and Eugene de Beauharnais had taken, who could neither be fed, nor sent to Cairo, and who had to be, and were, shot.

A graver and still more lamentable necessity awaited Bonaparte on his return. There was a hospital at Jaffa for plague-stricken patients. There is a fine picture by Gros, at the Musée, which portrays Bonaparte in the act of touching the plague stricken at Jaffa. The picture is

none the less beautiful because it represents an occurrence which did not take place.

Here is what M. Thiers says. We who are only petty novelists are sorry to find ourselves again in opposition to that giant among historians. It is the author of "The Revolution," of "The Consulate and the Empire" who is speaking.

When he reached Jaffa, Bonaparte blew up the fortifications. There was a hospital there for plague-stricken patients. It would have been impossible to carry them away. They would have been exposed to inevitable death had they been left where they were, either from sickness, hunger or the cruelty of the enemy. Therefore Bonaparte told Dr. Desgenettes that it would be much more humane to give them opium than to allow them to live; to which the doctor made the much-lauded reply: "My trade is to cure, not to kill." The opium was not administered, and this occurrence served to propagate an outrageous slander which has now been refuted.

I humbly beg M. Thiers's pardon, but this reply credited to Desgenettes, whom I knew as well as I did Larrey and all of the "Egyptians"—I mean my father's companions in the great expedition—is as apocryphal as that of Cambronne.

God forbid that I should slander (that is the word which M. Thiers used) the man who illuminated the first half of the nineteenth century with the torch of his glory; and when we come to Pichegru and the Duc d'Enghien, the reader will see whether I simply repeat infamous echoes.

We have said that Gros's picture represents something which did not happen, and we will prove it. Here is Davoust's report, written under the eyes and the orders of the commander-in-chief, in his official narrative:

The army reached Jaffa on the 5th Prairial (May 24). It remained there the 6th, 7th, and 8th (25th, 26th, 27th of May). The time was spent in disciplining the villages which had behaved badly. The fortifications of Jaffa were all blown up. All the artillery of the place was thrown into the sea. The wounded were sent away, both by land and sea. There were only a few ships, and in order to give time

for the land evacuation we were obliged to defer the departure of the army until the 9th.

Kléber's division formed the rear-guard, and did not start from Jaffa until the 10th (29th of May).

You see not a word about the plague, not a word about the visit to the hospital, and, above all, nothing about the touching of the plague-stricken patients. Not a word in any of the official reports.

Bonaparte's eyes had been bent upon France ever since he had turned them from the East, and it would have been very much misplaced modesty on his part had he concealed such a remarkable fact, which would have done honor, not to his reason perhaps, but to his daring.

Furthermore, this is how Bourrienne, who was an eye-witness, and a very impressionable actor, relates the incident:

Bonaparte went to the hospital. He found men there with their limbs amputated, wounded soldiers, afflicted with ophthalmia, who were moaning piteously, and men sick with the plague. The beds occupied by the latter stood to the right of the entrance. *I was walking beside the general.* I affirm that I did not see him touch one of the plague patients. Why should he? They were in the last stages of the malady; none of them spoke. Bonaparte knew well that he was not immune from the malady. Would fortune interfere in his behalf to shield him. It had certainly not seconded his plans with sufficient ardor during the last two months for him to depend upon that.

I ask: Would he expose himself to certain death, and leave his army in the midst of a desert which we had just made by our own ravages, in a demolished town, without help, or the hope of receiving any—he so necessary, so indispensable, as everybody must admit, to his army; he upon whom rested the responsibility of all the lives of those who had survived the last disaster, and who had just given proof of such devotion by their unalterable courage, their sufferings, and the endurance of privations; who were doing all that he could humanly ask of them, and who had confidence in him.

That is the voice of logic; but here is something convincing.

Bonaparte walked rapidly through the rooms, lightly flicking the yellow tops of his boots with the riding-whip which he held in his hand.

He spoke as follows as he strode back and forth:

"The fortifications are destroyed. Fortune was against me at Saint-Jean-d'Acre. I must go back to Egypt to preserve it against the enemies who are coming. In a few hours the Turks will be here. Let all those who are strong enough to rise, get up and come with us; they will be carried on litters and horses."

There were at the most sixty down with the plague. Anything that may have been said about a greater number is mere exaggeration. Their absolute silence, their complete prostration, and their general weakness announced the near approach of death. To take them in that state meant infallibly to introduce the plague in the army.

If one longs for ceaseless conquests, glory, and brilliant deeds one must accept his share of ill-fortune. When we think we have found something to cavil at in the actions of a leader who is hurried along by reverses and disastrous circumstances to terrible extremities, it is essential, before passing judgment upon him, to post ourselves thoroughly as to the given condition of affairs, and ask ourselves with our hands on our hearts whether we would not have done as he did. Then we must pity the man who is forced to do something cruel, but we must absolve him, since victory—let us be frank about it—cannot be won except with such or similar horrible accompaniments.

Here again is some one who has every interest in telling the truth. Listen:

He ordered an examination to be made in order to determine what had best be done. The report stated that seven or eight were so dangerously ill that they could not live more than twenty-four hours longer, and that, furthermore, plague-stricken as they were, they would spread the disease among all the soldiers who came in contact with them. Several asked for instant death. *He* thought that it would be an act of charity to advance their death by a few hours.

Do you still doubt? Napoleon shall speak for himself in the first person.

Where is the man who would not have preferred a speedy death to the horror of living exposed to the tortures of these

barbarians? *If my son*—and I think I love him as dearly as a child can be loved—*were in a situation similar to that of those unfortunates, my opinion would be in favor of doing the same thing to him; and were I in the same position I should demand that it be done to me.*

It seems that nothing could be clearer than those few lines. How does it happen that M. Thiers did not read them? And if he did read them, why did he deny a fact which was confessed by the man who would have the most interest in concealing it?

Thus we establish the truth, not for the purpose of attacking Bonaparte, who could not have acted otherwise, but to prove to the partisans of *pure* history that it is not always *true* history.

The little army followed the same route in returning from Cairo that it had on coming to Syria. But the heat grew more terrible each day. When they left Gaza it registered 35 degrees Centigrade, and if the mercury was placed in the sand it rose to 45 degrees. Bonaparte noticed two men filling a grave a short time before they reached El-Arich. He thought he recognized in them the two men to whom he had spoken a fortnight before. And when he questioned them they said that they were indeed the men who had carried Croisier's litter. The poor fellow had just died of tetanus.

"Did you bury his sabre with him?" asked Bonaparte.

"Yes," replied both men together.

He stayed until the grave was filled up. Then fearing that it might be violated, he said: "I want a volunteer to stay here as a sentinel until the army has passed."

"Here," said a voice.

Bonaparte turned and saw Quartermaster Falou seated upon his dromedary. "Ah, is it you?"

"Yes, citizen-general."

"How does it happen that you have a dromedary when the rest are on foot?"

"Because two men have died of the plague on my dromedary's back, and no one will ride it."

"And it seems that you are not afraid of the plague?"

"I am not afraid of anything, citizen-general."

"Very well. I will remember that. Look up your friend Faraud and both of you come to me at Cairo."

"We will be there, citizen-general."

Bonaparte glanced at Croisier's grave.

"Sleep in peace, poor Croisier," he said, "your modest grave will not often be disturbed."

CHAPTER XVIII

ABOUKIR

ON THE 14th of June, after a retreat across the burning sands of Syria almost as disastrous as the retreat from Moscow through the snows of the Beresina, Bonaparte entered Cairo in the midst of an immense concourse of people. The sheik, who was awaiting him, presented him with a magnificent horse and the Mameluke Roustan.

Bonaparte had said in his bulletin dated from Saint-Jean-d'Acre, that he was returning to Egypt to oppose the landing of a Turkish force assembled in the Island of Rhodes. He had been correctly informed upon this point, and the lookouts at Alexandria signalled on the 11th of July that they had sighted seventy-six sails in the offing, of which twelve were men-of-war, flying the Ottoman flag.

General Marmont, who was in command, sent courier after courier to Cairo and Rosetta, ordering the commander at Ramanieh to send him all the troops at his disposal, and sent two hundred men to the fort at Aboukir to reinforce that point. That same day Colonel Godard, the commander at Aboukir, wrote to Marmont:

The Turkish fleet is moored in the roadstead; I and my men will hold out until the last man falls rather than yield.

The 12th and 13th were employed by the enemy in hastening the arrival of some battalions which were behindhand.

There were one hundred and thirty ships in the roadstead on the evening of the 13th, of which thirteen carried seventy-four guns each, nine were frigates, and seventeen gunboats. The remainder were transports.

On the following evening Godard and his men had kept their word. He and his men were dead, and the redoubt was captured. Thirty-five men were still shut up in the fort under the command of Colonel Vinache. They held the fort for two days against the whole Turkish army.

Bonaparte learned of this while he was at the Pyramids. He started for Ramanieh, where he arrived on the 19th.

The Turks, now masters of the fort and the redoubt. had landed their whole artillery. Marmont, who had only eighteen hundred troops of the line, and two hundred sailors composing the nautical legion, with which to oppose the Turks at Alexandria, sent courier after courier to Bonaparte. Fortunately, instead of marching upon Alexandria, as Marmont had feared, or upon Rosetta, as Bonaparte had feared, the Turks with their customary indolence contented themselves with occupying the peninsula, and throwing out to the left of the redoubt a great line of intrenchments bordering upon Lake Madieh. They fortified little mounds some five or six feet in front of the redoubt, placing a thousand men in one and two thousand in another. They had eighteen thousand men in all. But they seemed to have come to Egypt for the sole object of being besieged.

On the 23d Bonaparte ordered the French army, which was now only distant a couple of hours' march from the Turkish army, to advance. The advance-guard, composed of Murat's cavalry and three of General Destaing's battalions, with two pieces formed the centre.

The division of General Rampon, who had Generals Fugière and Lanusse under his orders, was on the left. On the right General Lannes's division advanced along the shores of Lake Madieh.

Davoust, with two squadrons of cavalry and a hundred dromedaries, was placed between Alexandria and the army,

with orders to head off Mourad Bey, or any one else who should come to the assistance of the Turks, and to keep communication open between Alexandria and the army.

Kléber was expected, and he was to take command of the reserve. And finally Menou, who had gone toward Rosetta, found himself at dawn near the end of the bar of the Nile, by the ferry which crosses Lake Madieh. The French were within sight of the intrenchments almost before the Turks were aware of their proximity.

Bonaparte formed the columns of attack. General Destaing, who commanded them, marched straight against the fortified hill at the right, while two hundred of Murat's cavalry, stationed between the two hills, left their positions, and circling both sides of the hill to the right, cut off the retreat of the Turks who were attacked by General Destaing.

Meanwhile Lannes marched against the hill on the left, which was defended by two thousand Turks, and Murat sent two hundred more of his cavalry around that hill.

Destaing and Murat attacked at almost the same moment and with equal success. The two hills were carried at the bayonet's point. The fugitive Turks met the French cavalry, and threw themselves into the sea.

Destaing, Lannes, and Murat then marched against the village which formed the centre of the peninsula, and attacked in front. A column left the camp at Aboukir and came to the support of the village. Murat drew his sabre, a thing he never did until the last moment, gave the word to his cavalry, charged the column, and drove it back to Aboukir. Meanwhile Lannes and Destaing captured the village. The Turks fled on all sides only to meet Murat's cavalry as it was returning. The battlefield was already strewed with four or five hundred corpses. The French had only one man wounded. He was a mulatto, a compatriot of my father's, the commander of a squad of the Hercules Guides. The French now found themselves upon the highroad which covered the Turkish front.

Bonaparte had it in his power to box the Turks up in Aboukir, and harass them with bombs and shells while he was awaiting the arrival of Kléber and Régnier with their divisions; but he preferred to deal a decisive blow and have done with them. He ordered the army to march straight at the second line of defence. Lannes and Destaing, supported by Lanusse, still bore the brunt of the battle, and won the honors of the day.

The redoubt which defends Aboukir is the work of the English, and consequently it is constructed on the most scientific plan.

It was now defended by nine or ten thousand Turks. It was connected with the sea by a causeway. As the Turks had not had time to dig far enough in the other direction, it did not connect with the Lake of Madieh. A space some three hundred feet in length remained open, but it was occupied by the enemy and swept by the gunners at one and the same time. Bonaparte ordered an attack to the right and the front. Murat, who was ambushed in a grove of palms, was to attack on the left, and crossing the space where there was no causeway, under fire of the gunners, was to drive the enemy before him. The Turks sent out four detachments of about two thousand men each, when they saw these arrangements, who marched against our troops.

The battle would inevitably be a desperate one, for the Turks realized that they were shut up in the peninsula with the sea before them and a wall of French bayonets behind.

A heavy cannonade directed against the redoubt and the intrenchments of the right was the signal for a fresh attack. General Bonaparte thereupon sent General Fugière forward. He followed the bank, and turned to the right of the Turks. The thirty-second, which was stationed on the left of the hamlet which had recently been captured, was to hold the enemy in check, and sustain the eighteenth.

It was then that the Turks left their intrenchments and came to meet the French. The latter uttered a joyful shout. This was what they wanted. They rushed upon the enemy

with fixed bayonets. The Turks discharged their guns first, then their pistols, and finally drew their sabres. The French soldiers, who were not even checked by the triple discharge, closed in upon them with their sabres.

It was not until then that the Turks realized with what kind of men and weapons they had to reckon. With their guns slung over their shoulders and the sabres hanging by their cords they began a hand-to-hand fight, trying to snatch the terrible bayonets from the rifles, which pierced their breasts as they stretched forth their hands to grasp them.

But nothing could stop the eighteenth. They continued to advance at the same pace, driving the Turks before them to the foot of the intrenchments, which they attempted to carry by storm; but there the soldiers were driven back by a hot fire which raked them diagonally. General Fugière, who led the attack, received a bullet in the head in the beginning. The wound was a slight one, and he kept on, and spoke encouragingly to his men. But when a ball carried away his arm he was obliged to stop.

Adjutant-general Lelong, who came up with a battery of the seventy-fifth, made heroic efforts to induce the soldiers to defy this hurricane of fire. Twice he led them up to it and twice he was repulsed. The third time he darted forward and was on the verge of springing over the intrenchments when he fell dead.

Roland, who was standing near Bonaparte, had for a long time been asking for a command of some sort, which the latter hesitated to give him, until at length he felt that the moment had come for a supreme effort. He turned toward him. "Very well, go!" he said to him.

"Thirty-second brigade!" shouted Roland.

And the gallant survivors of Saint-Jean-d'Acre ran off after him, led by their major, Armagnac. Sub-lieutenant Faraud, recovered from his wound, was in the first rank.

Meanwhile, Brigadier-general Morange had made another attempt; but he was also driven back, leaving thirty men on the glacis and in the trench. The Turks thought

that they had conquered. Carried away by their custom of cutting off the heads of the dead, for which they received fifty *paras* apiece, they left the redoubt in disorder, and began the bloody work.

Roland pointed them out to his indignant soldiers.

"All our men are not dead," he cried; "some of them are only wounded. Let us save them."

At that moment Murat caught a glimpse through the smoke of what was going on. He darted forward under the fire of the artillery, passed through it, cut off the redoubt from the village with his cavalry, and fell upon the men who were engaged in the horrible operation of cutting off heads on the other side of the redoubt, while Roland attacked it in front, dashing in among the Turks with his usual reckless daring, where he mowed down the harvesters.

Bonaparte saw that the Turks had been taken at a disadvantage by this unexpected onslaught, and he sent Lannes with two battalions. Lannes attacked the redoubt with his usual impetuosity, on the left face and at the gorge. Pressed thus on all sides the Turks tried to reach the village of Aboukir; but Murat was between the village and the redoubt with his cavalry, and behind him was Roland and the thirty-second brigade, and at their right Lannes and his two divisions.

Their only refuge was the sea. They threw themselves into it wild with terror; for, since they were not in the habit of giving quarter to their prisoners, they preferred the sea, and the chance of reaching their ships, to death at the hands of the Christians whom they despised.

At this juncture the French were masters of the two hills, where they had begun the assault; of the hamlet where the remainder of those who had been defending the hills had taken refuge; of the redoubt which had cost so many brave men their lives. And now they were before the camp, and the Turkish reserve. They fell upon them.

Nothing could stop the French soldiers, who were drunk with the carnage which they had just perpetrated. Murat's

cavalry fell upon the pasha's guard like a whirlwind, a simoom, a hurricane.

Ignorant of the result of the battle, Mustapha, when he heard the shouting and uproar, mounted his horse, and placing himself at the head of his *icoglans*, he rushed to meet the French, encountered Murat, fired upon him at close range, and inflicted a slight wound. Murat cut off two of his fingers with the first blow of his sabre. With the second he would have cut off his head, but an Arab threw himself in front of the pasha, received the blow and fell dead. Mustapha gave up his cimeter, and Murat sent him to Bonaparte as a prisoner.

See Gros's magnificent picture.

The remnant of the army took refuge within the fort of Aboukir; the others were killed or drowned.

Never had such annihilation been seen since two armies had marched against each other. Aside from the two hundred Janissaries and the hundred men shut up in the fort, nothing was left of the army of eighteen thousand Turks.

Kléber arrived toward the close of the day. He asked about the battle, and inquired where he could find Bonaparte. Bonaparte was musing out on the most advanced point of Aboukir. He was looking at the gulf which had swallowed up the French fleet—his sole hope of returning to France. Kléber went up to him and took him by the arm; and while Bonaparte's eyes remained veiled and sombre, he exclaimed: "General, you are the greatest man in the world!"

CHAPTER XIX

DEPARTURE

DURING the year that this eighth crusade lasted—the ninth if we count Saint Louis's double attempt as two—Bonaparte did all that it was humanly possible to do. He took Alexandria, conquered the Mamelukes at Chebrouïss and the Pyramids, took Cairo, achieved the

conquest of the Delta, and by means of its marshes completed the conquest of Upper Egypt, took Gaza, Jaffa, and destroyed the Turkish army of Djezzar at Mount Tabor; and finally he annihilated a second Turkish army at Aboukir.

The tri-color had floated triumphantly over the Jordan and the Nile.

But he was ignorant of what was happening in France, and that was why on the evening of his victory of Aboukir he was gazing dreamily at the gulf which had swallowed up his fleet.

He sent for Quartermaster Falou, and questioned him about the battle of Beyrout, the disaster to the flotilla, and the loss of the "Italie," and his presentiment haunted him more persistently than ever. He called Roland in the hope of learning some news.

"My dear Roland," said he, "I greatly desire to open a new career for you."

"What is it?" asked Roland.

"That of a diplomat."

"Oh, what a sad idea that is, general."

"Nevertheless, you must yield to it."

"What! You are not going to allow me to refuse?"

"No."

"Then explain."

"I am going to send you with a flag of truce to Sidney Smith."

"My instructions?"

"You are to find out what is happening in France, and you will try to distinguish the truth from the false in what the commodore tells you, by no means an easy matter."

"I will do my best. What will be the ostensible object of my embassy?"

"An exchange of prisoners. The English have twenty-five of our men; we have two hundred and fifty Turks. We will give them the two hundred and fifty men if they will give us our twenty-five Frenchmen."

"And when am I to start?"

"To-day."

It was the 26th of July.

Roland went and he returned that same evening with a pile of newspapers. Sidney had recognized him as the hero of Saint-Jean-d'Acre, and had offered no objections to telling him what was going on in Europe. Then, as he had read incredulity in Roland's eyes, he had given him all the French, English, and German papers which he had on the "Tiger."

The news which these papers contained was disastrous. The Republic, defeated at Sockah and Magnano, had lost Germany at Sockah and Magnano. Masséna, intrenched in Switzerland, occupied an unassailable position on the Albis. The Appenines had been invaded and the Var threatened.

The next day, when Bonaparte saw Roland, he asked: "Well?"

"Well?" replied the young man.

"I knew that Italy was lost!"

"You will have to take it again."

"We will try," returned Bonaparte. "Call Bourrienne."

Bourrienne was called.

"Ask Berthier where Ganthéaume is," said Bonaparte.

"He is at Ramanieh superintending the construction of the fleet which is to start for Upper Egypt."

"Are you sure?"

"I received a letter from him yesterday."

"I need a brave and reliable messenger," Bonaparte said to Roland; "send for Falou and his dromedary."

Roland went out.

"Write these few words to Alexandria, Bourrienne," continued Bonaparte.

As soon as this is received Admiral Ganthéaume will report to General Bonaparte. BOURRIENNE.

26th July, 1799.

Ten minutes later Roland returned with Falou and his dromedary.

Bonaparte glanced at the messenger with satisfaction.

"Is your mount in as good a condition as you are?" he asked.

"My dromedary and I, general, are in condition to do seventy-five miles a day."

"I only ask twenty."

"A mere nothing."

"You must carry a letter."

"Where?"

"To Ramanieh."

"It shall be delivered to-night."

"Read the superscription."

"Admiral Ganthéaume."

"Now if you were to lose it—"

"I will not lose it."

"One must foresee everything. Listen to what it says."

"Is it long?"

"Only a sentence."

"That is all right then; what is it?"

As soon as this is received Admiral Ganthéaume will report to General Bonaparte.

"That is easy to remember."

"Then go."

Falou made his dromedary kneel down, climbed upon his hump, and started him off at a trot.

"I am off," he shouted.

And he was in fact already some distance off. The next evening he appeared again.

"The admiral is following me," he shouted.

The admiral arrived during the night. Bonaparte had not retired and Ganthéaume found him writing.

"You will prepare," said Bonaparte, "two frigates, the 'Muiron' and the 'Carrière,' and two smaller vessels, the 'Revanche' and the 'Fortune,' with provisions enough to last forty or fifty men two months. Not a word about it to any one. You are to come with me."

Ganthéaume withdrew, promising not to speak of it.

Bonaparte sent for Murat.

"Italy is lost," said he; "the wretches! They have wasted the fruits of our victories. We must go. Select five hundred men for me." Then, turning to Roland, he added: "You will see that Falou and Faraud are included in the detachment."

Roland bowed assent.

General Kléber, to whom Bonaparte intended to leave the command of the army, was invited to Rosetta, "to confer with the commander-in-chief on matters of the utmost importance."

Bonaparte made an appointment with him which he knew very well he could not keep. He wished, however, to avoid Kléber's reproaches and bitter frankness. He wrote all that he would have said to him, and gave as his reason for not keeping his appointment his fear that the English cruisers might return at any moment.

The vessels destined for Bonaparte were once more to carry Cæsar and his fortune. But this time it was not Cæsar sailing eastward to add Egypt to the conquests of Rome; it was Cæsar revolving in his mind the vast projects which had made the conqueror of the Gauls cross the Rubicon.

He was going back without recoiling at the idea of overturning the government for which he had fought on the 13th Vendémiaire, and which he had sustained on the 18th Fructidor.

A dream of gigantic magnitude had faded away before Saint-Jean-d'Acre. A still vaster vision was forming in his mind as he left Alexandria.

On the 23d of August, a dark and gloomy night, a boat pushed off from the Egyptian shore, and put Bonaparte aboard the "Muiron."

THE END